

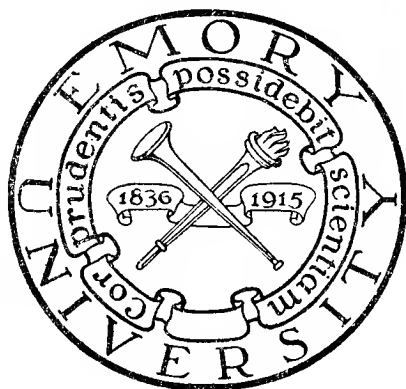








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LETTERS  
OF A  
SOLITARY, WANDERER.  
VOL. I.



THE  
LETTERS  
OF A  
SOLITARY WANDERER:  
CONTAINING  
*NARRATIVES*  
OF  
VARIOUS DESCRIPTION.

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*B. CHARLOTTE SMITH.*

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VOI. I.

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London:  
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1800.





# PREFACE.

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SINCE I began this Work almost two years have elapsed, and the two first volumes have been printed nearly half that time. My original intention was to publish six volumes, each containing a single Narrative, which the Solitary Wanderer is supposed to collect in the countries he visits.

Books of entertainment, usually described as Novels, are supposed to be, if not exclusively, principally read by young persons; and much  
has

has been said of the inutility and the danger of that species of reading.

Of the danger I mean not to speak, except to remark, that a young woman who is so weak as to become in imagination ' the Heroine of a Novel, would have been a foolish, frivolous, and affected character, though she had never heard of a circulating library.

That Novels are at least useless where they are not pernicious I cannot allow: if they do not instruct, they may awaken a wish for useful knowledge; and young persons, who have no taste for any thing but narrative, may sometimes, by the local description of  
a Novel,

a Novel, learn what they would never have looked for in books of Geography or Natural History.—The dangers and distresses that are expected to form the greater part of the story in every Work of this kind, may be imagined amidst the most interesting period of history, without, however, falsifying or misrepresenting any material or leading fact. I have endeavoured to construct these volumes in some degree on this plan. It is my present purpose to prepare the remaining part of the Work for publication early in the ensuing summer.

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

*October 20th, 1800.*



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## LETTERS, &c.

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### LETTER I.

WHEN I undertake to 'give you a regular account of my wanderings, or at least as regular as my rambling life will admit of, you will own that I have done right in determining to try if continual change of scene will not relieve me from the deep depression I have now for some months vainly endeavoured to conquer. Already I feel myself better able than I was to converse upon paper, though I still would fly from the well-meant importunity of those who

will not let me be sick or miserable my own way, but continually distress me with inquiries and remonstrances, and say: "What aileth thee? and wherefore is thy countenance overcast, and thine heart disquieted?" when, if *they* cannot understand; I cannot explain why I am unhappy.—Ah! how difficult it is to communicate to others what one feels! After all, how little impression does it make!—And *cui bono*, if it made any, when the evil is not of a sort that friendship and reason united can cure?—Besides, every man has either pains or pleasures of his own which are sufficient to engage him. You, my good friend, are a married man, have a wife and a family, and live a sober and undoubtedly an happy life; but I, who shall *now* never seek for the same species of happiness, doubt whether I could make even you enter into my sensations, or cease to accuse me of misanthropy, or even unmanly and unworthy repining.

Enough of all this—Since you persist in desiring it, I will tell you the nothing I *do*, and leave all *sentiment* out of our correspondence ; but then you must not be displeased at having perpetual description, little narrative, and still less character. My hills will boldly swell, my woods wave over as many nightingales as I can collect, my castles frown, and my streams fall, or murmur, or glitter, as luxuriously, and as frequently, as if I were the wandering and persecuted heroine of a modern novel in the very newest taste. You may be assured, that should I meet with either ghost or banditti, I will not fail to engage them to

Deepen the horrors of the falling floods,  
And breathe a browner horror on the woods.

There is but little originality of character any where to be met with—the affluent are polished to a certain level of intellect—the poor are the mere creatures of necessity.—But I believe, when you

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desire



desire to hear not only *what* I meet with but who, you desire less to amuse yourself than to detach my style at least from that subject which dwells nearest my heart.

I think you were acquainted with my determination to go Northward. I will not send you a detail of the posts, nor say how often on the windows or wain-scots of the inns I found tender *notices* of lovers on their way to Gretna-Green; such as

P. L. the happiest of mankind, was here on Friday, the 22d of May, 17 , with his adored E. W.—Or

Alonzo and his angelic Seraphina changed horses here on the 16th of March, 179

These happy pairs either feared no pursuit, or could not resist recording their felicity by memorandums, which, if they thought at all, they might suppose would be overlooked by their pursuers. It is not a question, whether the  
adored

adored E. L. and the angelic Seraphina appeared quite so adored, or so angelic, twelve months after these dates?

I shall get out of the beaten track, which is called the Great North Road, as soon as I can, and shall continue my course along the coast of Yorkshire, a part of England I have never seen, though I believe there is very little to see.

Adieu.-

## LETTER II.

AT this lonely inn, or rather alehouse, where I have taken up my temporary abode, I enjoy the seclusion I have so long sought. The simple folk who keep the house, were they to-morrow to find me dead, would have no other concern than to discover whether I had effects enough about me to pay for Christian burial; for undoubtedly it would shock *them* extremely to comply with the request I have, you remember, made to my friends—to be deposited under the turf of the nearest hill, beneath the rugged surface of a wild heath, the shade of the next copse of hazle, or group of beech.

Well! it will not come to that yet; for I feel the advantage of changing the air  
and

and of new scenes on my outward man, though my mind is still inert and torpid. I wish it was November.—This garish green, these soft unfolding leaves, this luxurious grass spangled with wild flowers, awaken the memory to recollections of bliss—fled, fled for ever. Nature is again lovely; the object that once made scenes even ruder than these more delicious than a fabled paradise, is gone.

I am afraid my heart is changed; for I have felt myself peevish at the sight of happiness, or that state which we are contented to call so; and I turn with sick disgust from the view of re-animated nature. It is childish, it is unmanly, you will tell me. I believe it is, and you see I have undertaken to cure myself by a course of which you have no opinion. If it fail, I will then, according to the terms of our convention, submit to the regimen that you think so much better.

My present temporary residence is in a cottage on the boundary of an

hilly common, under the shade of a tuft of old oaks, that mingle their giant arms on the other side with the trees of a tract of forest land frequent in this country. Eastward, at the distance of three or four miles, rise the wolds, and begin that chain of elevated ground, which, running northward, ends in the extreme part of the island.

Without books, and with no other companions but my servant and my two horses, you will think my lingering in such places as I have described a very strange plan: and you despise, I know, the pursuits of the botanist, or the mineralogist, which I have occasionally taken up with some degree of interest. You opine, that it is of no manner of importance to the world whether some plant of no known use, or evident beauty, is found in a ditch in Yorkshire, or in a bog in Lincolnshire; nor can you prevail upon yourself to care, whether the strata beneath the surface of any given  
extent

extent of land be argillaceous or calcareous. When, however, it is considered, that to the cultivation of these two branches of science mankind owes so many of the necessities and conveniences of life, I cannot think the pursuit of them useless. The first, I own, used to interest and soothe my mind beyond any other study; but now I am in a state of spirits when it would rather depress than charm them. You need not therefore apprehend that I shall talk much of my discoveries of rare plants.

Of objects of that study, which is alone, you think, worthy of a rational or at least a reasoning being, there are not likely to be many; yet even this remote and solitary house has its little knot of politicians; and here, once a week, ale and argument

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“impart  
“An hour’s importance to the poor man’s heart.”

I have not unfrequently listened to the

village politics, and sometimes admired the solid though uncultivated understanding of the illiterate peasant, or farmer, just able to read a newspaper three weeks old to the rustic circle. Alas! I will own, that I have been oftener humbled by seeing the spark of heaven, called reason, so obliterated and extinguished by savage ignorance, and propensities which degrade the man beneath the brute, that I have doubted whether such men ought to rank as human beings. What becomes of the souls of these animals? But, indeed, what becomes of those of madmen or idiots?—I will not, however, start a question in metaphysics, which you, perhaps, would answer in a very summary way.

I have just received your last letter.—So, you really think I should do better to resort to some of those public places, of which the North of England boasts a considerable variety? My dear friend, what should *I* do among such people as  
are

are the summer residents at these places? I never play; I am totally uninterested in the inquiry whether Colonel Such-a-one and Mrs. Such-a-one have too great a partiality for each other; and would not give a straw to know what marriages are going forward, or whether this man lives beyond his income, or the next man penuriously within it.—Accomplished misses, with new songs, elegant rebuses, and witty charades; or their mamas and aunts, sage and sententious critics on their neighbours' lives, or the new novels of the season, are alike indifferent to me.—I cannot talk over the last year's fox-chases with the young men; or, alarmed at the fall of stocks, listen to the terrible prognostics of the old ones, and deplore the increase of jacobinism, and tremble lest the free-masons of Europe should overthrow its government.—Indeed, I have more than once found my anger conquering my contempt, when profane fellows have

B 6                      talked



talked to me in this manner—and then I have been vexed with myself for suffering so much absurdity to draw me into an argument, or ruffle my temper. Believe me, such an assemblage as these places usually produce, may irritate and render incurable the misanthropy (which you say is a great fault in my character), but cannot afford one moment's alleviation to the sufferings of a wounded heart.

Let me then proceed on my solitary rambles, far from that tedious routine which we agree to call society. When I am wandering alone, or with only my silent, faithful Arnold, that distaste of the world which you wish to cure is so far from growing upon me, that I feel it becomes milder; and as my heart expands to the great Governor of the Universe, I resign myself into his hands—still doubting, however, whether it is not arrogance and presumption to suppose that the Supreme Director of so many worlds deigns to consider

consider so poor and worthless an atom of existence——For the rest, my hopes and desires are now reduced into so narrow a compass, that though yet a very young man, I may truly say with one of the greatest of our countrymen\*, who in more advanced life declares,

“ There is nothing under heaven, saving a true friend, unto which my heart doth lean; and this dear freedom has begotten me this peace, that I mourn not for that end which must be, nor spend a wish to have one minute added to the uncertain date of my years.”

I go from hence to-morrow; and as soon as I find any place which I like well enough to induce me to become a while stationary, you shall hear from me again.

Farewell.

\* Lord Bacon.

## LETTER III.

AFTER I had written to you last, I set forth, unknowing and almost unheeding whither. The wild and mountainous line of country called Cleveland attracted me, not so much by any beauty I expected to find there, as because there is something congenial to the state of my mind in the appearance of desolate and uncultivated nature. Still all is green, green and smiling. Even among the black swamps and rough knolls of the wolds, the hands of May have scattered tender grasses and fairy flowers. The banks of the Esk, along which I afterwards travelled, were adorned with all that makes river scenery pleasing; but as it was not of pleasing objects I was in search, I bent my way towards the sea-

sea-shore, and have set up my rest at a farm-house about three miles from Whitby, the *Dunus finus* of the Romans, and between that town and Robin Hood's Bay.

Before the windows of my rustic abode, at the distance of half a mile, stretches the broad expanse of ocean which divides this island from the northern part of the continent of Europe ; behind it rise almost semi-circularly a chain of high grounds, called the Moor Hills. Industry, encouraged by the demand for the productions of the earth, which the neighbourhood of the port of Whitby occasions, has in some measure conquered the natural barrenness of this moory and ungrateful line of country, and its inequalities are in many places covered with young wheat, or are just tinted by the slender blades of Lent corn scarce peeping above the ground. As I have traversed the shore, where the  
cliffs

cliffs in some places have fallen on the beach, I have found encrusted in the chalk rock those forms resembling serpents\*, formerly believed to have been really those reptiles, which, at the intercession of St. Hilda, a Saxon saint of great repute (who founded the Abbey of Whitby, where the Princess Edelfleda afterwards took the veil), were turned into stones. This Ægis, however, so long supposed to have been held by the sacred hands of the Saxon Virgin, has been now wrested from her by that light of science so fatal to the legendary superstition of all countries; and the chemist and mineralogist know that these are calcareous petrifications, always found in the neighbourhood of alum mines. St. Hilda still retains the merit of having strenuously opposed the *consecration* of the clergy; which shews that

\* Ammon's horns,

her taste was at least equal to her piety, whatever might be her success in turning serpents into stone.

In a wood that clothes the high banks of a stream, hurrying from the hills to throw itself into the Esk, I found, on the second day of my excursions in these solitary regions, the ruins of what appeared to me to have been once a small votive chapel, or oratory. A gothic window, which yet remained, seemed to be particularly elegant; its fretted compartments were in some places entire, and had certainly been executed with greater elegance than was usually bestowed on such small buildings. I paced the area through matted weeds and tufts of elder; it was not extensive, and little remained that might inform me to what particular purpose it was destined, till a peasant crossed my way who was returning from his day's work of stripping bark in the woods. I entered into conversation with him, and learned, as we walked together

gether to the village by the light of an early moon,

“ While rosy evening linger'd in the West,”

that this small ruin was called the Hermitage, and belonged to the Abbey of Palsgrave, on the domain of which it stands.—“ The Abbey of Palsgrave?” cried I, flattering myself I had made an acquisition of some antient building not very much known; “ and where is the Abbey of Palsgrave?”—“ About three moiles an end,” answered the man in his Yorkshire dialect. “ And is it,” said I, “ a ruin like this?”—He answered that it was deserted now of all its inhabitants, because the family it had belonged to were all either dead, or gone “ beyond sea.” My curiosity being farther excited, I learned that the Abbey had been, to use my conductor’s phrase, made into an house by a great rich family, “ Romans though, Romans;” which on being explained, I found meant that they  
were

were of the Roman Catholic religion; but that some how or other it had so fallen out that they had never thriven for a many years back; and it was the opinion of the country, that either because the house had once been entirely dedicated to religious purposes, and should not have been profaned, or because of some sins of the latest possessors of it, it was certainly visited by a curse, and would stand empty till it dropped down.

“ And which, friend, is the way to this ancient house? Can I reach it by following the path I saw you in, that leads through the woods?”

“ Why, you would not go there?”

“ Not go there? Why should I not?”

“ And to-night?”

“ Aye, to-night, or any other night; why not?”

“ There’s noot to be found there, I’ll promise you,” said the man, who seemed to shudder at the temerity of my design,  
while



while he doubted its motives. "No, no, there's nothing to be found there; the Priests took care of that.—Some old rubbishy things, indeed, some folks do say, be yet in the old rambling rooms; but, for my part, I'll not go about amongst them, special of a night, if there was a bushel of gold to be got as my reward."

"But why not? Where is the danger?"

"Bless you, Master," cried the peasant, "it's easy to see you are but a stranger in this country, or you'd never ask such questions. Why, mon, the Abbey is haunted."

"It will suit my purpose exactly," said I; "I have been in search of such a thing ever since I can recollect; and for a ghost, there is nothing I have so great an inclination to see."

My informer, who had perhaps some suspicion before of my principles, now seemed to have a still worse opinion of my  
my

my intellects, and I saw began to quicken his pace, while he continued reluctantly to answer the questions I put to him; till, as we approached the village near which my abode is situated, he struck into a cross path on the common, and, leaping over a rude stile in a hedge of dried furze, bade me a good night, and disappeared.

You despise, as puerile and ridiculous, the fashionable taste, which has filled all our modern books of entertainment with caverns and castles, peopled our theatres with spectres, and, instead of representing life as it is, has created a new school, where any thing rather than probability, or even possibility, is attended to. And you will smile contemptuously when I tell you, that after questioning on the subject of my new discovery my landlady, a sage and not silent dame, turned of fifty, and hearing her vague yet certainly exaggerated account of Palsgrave Abbey, and its latest inhabitants, I am  
convinced

convinced that there are materials enough belonging to the story to make a romance, such as are now in high estimation: and as I have promised, you know, to give you description, observation, or anecdote, as I go along, and have in truth nothing very great in the two former branches of correspondence to send you, suppose I were to give you an history of Palsgrave Abbey, if, on nearer inspection, it shall seem worthy to appear, though only in manuscript, among the castles, towers, abbeys, priories and caverns, caves, cliffs, subterraneous passages and rugged ruins, rocks, and rifted battlements, which have filled so many pages, and excited so much admiration both in the closet and on the stage.

I have collected a number of circumstances which I am persuaded are authentic, and which I think, without any assistance from an imagination that you have often told me is gloomy and romantic, will make an history not uninteresting,

ing, nor without its moral. Instead, therefore, of humouring any visionary fantasies, and, as I visit the Priory, “looking lackadaisically” over the substitute for the old gate, “or sitting down on one of the fragments, taking in imagination the fairest of the sisterhood to sit beside me, and playing with the cross at her breast\*,” I shall linger about this melancholy abode, and make my picture amid the very scenery where the incidents happened.

I recollect, however, that you do not admire, indeed that you seldom condescend to read, those modern compositions to which my history will bear a considerable resemblance—I mean the romance-novel or novel-romance of the present day, in which the magic of genius has in two or three instances made me forget “*que rien n’est beau que le vrai*”—which I have sometimes thought

\* Sterne, or Letters passing for his.

incontrovertibly true, till Shakspeare and Milton have driven the axiom to flight.

I know not whether it is in one of his hypercriticisms on the former of those immortal men, whose works he could not possibly understand, that Voltaire has the following passage :

\* “ Revenons toujours à la nature des hommes ; il n’aime que l’extraordinaire ; et cela est si vrai, que si tôt que le beau et le sublime est commun, il ne paraît plus ; on veut de l’extraordinaire en tout genre, et on va jusqu’à l’impossible.”

It undoubtedly seems easier to collect surprising events, which, in connecting, setting probability aside, neither time

\* We must, however, always advert to the nature of man : he delights only in the extraordinary ; the truth of which is evident when we see, that whenever the great and the sublime becomes familiar, it is great and sublime no longer. — In every composition the extraordinary is sought for, and even the impossible.

neither time, action, or place, the three great unities, need be adhered to, and in composing of which we may indulge ourselves in the most daring and improbable fictions; than it is to draw characters such as we know exist, and to find a fable proper to bring them forward. It is easier, I believe, to write an Arabian tale, with necromancers and genii, than to collect, as Richardson does, a set of characters acting and speaking so exactly as such people so circumstanced would act and speak in real life, that we almost doubt whether the scenes and the actors are merely imaginary. It is true, that the minuteness of description, to which this powerful deception is in a great degree owing, renders some of the letters excessively tedious; but the pleasure that Richardson's writings still afford, though the manners are so changed, and taste has undergone so many revolutions, proves that his knowledge of the human heart,

and his adherence to nature, have charms that make us overlook the fid-fad sort of *caquet* which sometimes fatigues us.

Yet it has been asserted that strong native genius can alone succeed in that style of writing where the horrible and supernatural predominate, and where the greatest effect is produced by a certain degree of obscurity. And it is undoubtedly true, that the rudest and wildest sketch of Salvator is more precious than the most laboured piece of the correctest Flemish master. I know, however, that there is no hope of interesting you in the production of the modern school of books of amusement, though surely "*tout genre est bon hormi le genre ennuyeux.*"—Here is enough of criticism.

Farewell!

LET-

## LETTER IV.

May 9.

From a Cottage made out of one of the most distant Offices of Palsgrave Priory.

TO account for the many circumstances (not easily to be traced after the events have happened two years) which you will find in the ensuing Narrative, it is necessary to tell you, that I found living, in what was formerly an harness-room and corn-room to one of the stables of Palsgrave, a poor woman, admirably qualified to serve as my Cicerone. She is the widow of one of the servants of the great house; and though not quite so wretched in her appearance as she whom Mr. Gilpin describes, who shewed him, or, in hopes of a small gratuity, affected to shew him, the Abbot's library at Tintern \*, yet poverty and all its ca-

\* See Gilpin's Observations on the Wye, 1770.



lamities have fallen heavily upon her. Her husband being dismissed by the steward at the death of Sir Mordaunt, he went with his family to seek his fortune in London; but falling into ill-health, he returned into his own country to die, and his widow and two children, hunted from parish to parish, were at length suffered to take shelter in one of the distant offices of Palsgrave, which her brother, a carpenter, has contrived to make less ruinous than the surrounding buildings of the same description; and here, on so slender an allowance as can be extorted from the farmers who manage the parish, and a little spinning, she contrives with her infants barely to exist.

To such a forlorn being “a curious traveller,” who promised to pay her well for any trouble he might give her, was assuredly no unacceptable visitor. Mrs. Lenthwaite willingly undertook to go with me over the house, which is indeed  
a most

a most extraordinary place ; and there is to me something more melancholy in this recent desertion, these traces of modern life mingled with the venerable relics of religious antiquity, than even in contemplating the last, in their desolate state of almost entire dilapidation; where moss and weeds stream from the broken walls, or water-stains only mark them. But if the place be wild, and strange, and gloomy, the history of the persons it belongs to is much more so.

You will not surely be so merely a matter-of-fact reader as to inquire how I came to be so well acquainted with the characters of these people, as to be able to relate even what they said, and how they thought ? Should you, however, ask so very unreasonable a question, I refer you, though I do not invoke her, to the Muse which has inspired every writer of Epic, whether in prose or verse, from Homer to John Bunyan, and so on to all the inventors of romances

and tales—whether ancient Troubadours wandering among the chateaux of Provence and Languedoc, or the composers of the memoirs, novels, tales, and romances, of which the present period is so fertile.

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In that division of the county of York which is called the North-Riding, and under a rude tract of mountainous country, that rises above the river Esk, not far from its communication with the sea, are the remains of the ancient family seat of the Falconbergs.

Its last inhabitant was Sir Mordaunt Falconberg, the descendant of a Catholic family of such antiquity, that some of its latest members had looked with irreverence on the title of Baronet, though the date of that honour was so far back as 1614. They felt themselves rather humbled than elevated by sharing this  
dignity

dignity with so many who had purchased it; because the Falconbergs had often received the honour of knighthood in the field, and had been distinguished among the Crusaders of the twelfth century, while they traced their pedigree till it was lost among names which, for aught any one knew, were the immediate descendants of the Patriarch Noah.

Of all that this family once possessed Sir Mordaunt retained only its proud fierceness of temper, its bigoted attachment to the religion of modern Rome, and a very large fortune. Sir Mordaunt was of a saturnine complexion; his forehead was narrow and wrinkled, and his thin and hollow cheeks shaded by a sable beard; pale livid lips, large rolling eyes suffused with bile, and now appearing fiery with furious passions, now darkened by sullen despondence, together with a person gaunt and ill-formed, made his whole figure rather likely to excite terror than inspire affection. He

was, however, feldom feen ; and the habits of his mind were gueffed rather from his manner of life than from his converfation. He admitted no fociety ; no neighbour or acquaintance had for many years entered the inhofpitable doors of Palfgrave-Priory : nor had he any friend or affociate in the gloomy folitude to which he condemned himfelf ; fave only an Italian and a Spaniard, both fupposed to be Jefuits, one of whom had the care of the confciences of fome other Catholic families, and acted in that diftrict under a commiffion from Rome as a fort of Bifhop ; the other was folely dedicated to Sir Mordaunt, and generally refided in the houfe, where his fuperior alfo occafionally lived for three or four months at a time.

A fteward filent and mechanical as clockwork, an houfekeeper who had no will but that of her fpiritual director, and five mental fervants, only one of whom

whom was ever admitted into the interior of that part of the house inhabited by Sir Mordaunt, composed the rest of the family. The large stables were without a single horse, and the carriages were dropping to pieces in the coach-houses. No tenant ever approached the doors; Mr. Camus the steward receiving the rents at a public-house six miles distant, on the borders of the estate, where he held the courts of the manor at stated periods; and whither each man came with the certainty that he must, if not punctual, expect the rigour of the steward to enforce punctuality, rigour which could not be mitigated by any appeal to their invisible landlord.

Some of those gentlemen, who, possessing estates within ten or even twenty miles, considered themselves as neighbours to Sir Mordaunt, had sometimes felt curiosity about this strange man. The younger of these his countrymen had never seen him at all, and the elder

not for many years. These latter had attempted to visit him, when after a long residence abroad he brought home, being then about forty-five or six, a beautiful young woman of seventeen, a native of England born of Catholic parents, whom he had married out of a convent in Italy. But Sir Mordaunt had rudely repulsed their advances; and the neighbouring families knew little more of the last Lady Falconberg, than that, after having brought him two sons and a daughter, she died, and was buried in the chapel within the house.

Instead however of seeking in the children consolation for the loss of their mother, Sir Mordaunt, who had sent the younger son and daughter abroad almost as soon as they were born, did not recall them, even when they were of an age to alleviate the sorrows of a father; for the eldest alone possessed all his paternal affection. Mr. Falconberg was, till twelve years old, brought

up at Palsgrave ; but his education partook of the monkish austerity of the house. Golgota and Galezza, the two priests, were his tutors, and in his thirteenth year another of the same description of men conducted him to Italy. From thence Mr. Falconberg returned in four years, and it was then supposed that he would be introduced to the world as the heir to one of the largest fortunes in the county. But he was never seen except by accident on a short airing with one or other of the monks, when he was observed to be a pale thin youth, whose appearance did not promise long life ; and after a residence of about twenty months at Palsgrave, he was said to be in a decline. His father, in great alarm, hurried him back to the milder climate of Naples, where he did not long survive ; but dying on his nineteenth birth-day, his remains were brought over to be interred at the Priory with his ancestors.



From that time ten-fold gloom fell on this melancholy residence and its wretched master. The servants who saw Sir Mordaunt, whenever they ventured to speak of the effect of his grief, described it as something terrific; and when the natural inquiry was made, whether he would not now send for his second son? the inquirer was told, that Mr. Henry Falconberg had been dead some years; but that Sir Mordaunt, who had hardly ever seen him, and felt no affection for him, had taken little or no notice of his loss, and it had merely been announced by Father Golgota, that he was no more.

Even in so remote and thinly inhabited a quarter as this part of Yorkshire, there are always some persons who busy themselves in inquiring into the affairs of others. These now began to wonder that Sir Mordaunt did not send for his daughter, who was, as they pretended to know, a most beautiful and accomplished

plished young lady; but it was then given out by the spiritual directors of the house, that Sir Mordaunt designed her for a nun, an avocation to which she was, they said, entirely disposed. Certain zealous Protestants exclaimed for awhile against the cruelty of such a sacrifice; and others, who thought more of the great estates of Sir Mordaunt than of his religious prejudices, began to wonder who would possess the former. But both the good Protestants and the good calculators had soon something else to think of, and Sir Mordaunt was suffered to live his own way, his very existence being hardly remembered beyond the paling of his park.

From the hour when the remains of Mr. Falconberg were deposited with his ancestors, the fullen and ferocious temper of Sir Mordaunt sunk into deeper dejection, or was subject to fiercer flurys of fury, which, if not more frequent, were more terrific to the few persons  
about

about him. A darker shade fell over the melancholy mansion; its unfrequented courts, now wholly neglected, were overgrown with grass and weeds; the doors appeared to have forgotten to turn on their rusty hinges, and silence and desolation wholly to possess the apartments within, of which all the exterior windows were closed, save two that belonged to one of Sir Mordaunt's rooms. He had ordered those which had formerly been destined to the use of Mr. Falconberg to be shut up, and every thing left in them, his books, musical instruments, and even his clothes, exactly as they were when he had used them for the last time; and there, it was said, the unhappy father passed many hours deploring the object which alone had been dear to him. Such too had been his custom in frequenting the rooms once inhabited by his wife, into which no person had been admitted since her decease—though, as light was sometimes observed

observed through the breaks which time had made in the shutters, it was believed that Sir Mordaunt passed many sad hours of hopeless regret in those chill and dreary apartments.

The old and spacious mansion, narrowed by these curtailments, was still too large for its solitary master; who occupied three rooms at the north-east quarter of the house, one of which opened into the chapel, and from thence into a cloister, which was built quite round a court overgrown with nightshade, nettle, and henbane, and on one side forming a sort of piazza, which, without any buildings over it, divided it from the park. The park was an extensive tract of unequal land, thickly wooded with oak and pine, of great antiquity; for the affluence of the family had for many centuries been great, and their taste for improvement little, so that the axe had never been heard in these  
sylvan

ylvan regions, which bore rather the appearance of a forest than a park.

The habitation was as silent as it was gloomy. On certain days the deep-toned nasal chaunt of one of the priests was heard singing mass in the chapel; but the organ that once accompanied it was now silent, for the domestic of Mr. Falconberg who had been instructed to play on it had not returned after his master's death. The curtain of black cloth that enclosed it in the gallery was now never undrawn.

Other sounds there were none within this dismal dwelling, but occasionally the murmurs of the servants in the offices, who there only ventured upon conversation; for, as they glided about the house, and particularly when they had occasion to approach the apartment of Sir Mordaunt, each seemed to fear the sound of his own voice, and the echo of his own footsteps; and hollow whispers  
only

only crept along the desolate galleries when any domestic met his fellow.

Without were heard the brayings of the stags, of which the park was full ; or the hoarse bark of several great blood-hounds, which were chained up in the court-yard, or at night ranged round the courts and cloisters. Many birds of cheerful note seemed to have fled from the mournful neighbourhood ; but in the thick and high woods and coppices every way surrounding the house, the deep murmur of multitudes of wild pigeons might have drowned the cheerful shrill cry of the yaffel, and the screams of the jay, or short cawing of the daws, which had been long the inhabitants of the cornices and broken masses of the ancient building.

As great part of the food of the family was fish, a portion of the waters of the Esk had been led into three long canals, which, with some lesser pieces of water serving as stews, were connected  
with

with the tunnels of a decoy in the lowest part of the park ; and as the whole was rather for utility than beauty, willows, fallows, and alders had been allowed to grow around the whole tract, and render it a kind of watery wilderness, which was inhabited by an infinite number of aquatic fowl, that were now seldom disturbed ; for the decoy was neglected, and the ponds only attended to for the sake of the supply they afforded of aliment for the maigre days of the family.

Such was the general appearance of the place, when, in a gloomy evening of autumn, about four months after the death of Mr. Falconberg, a post-chaise was seen to drive up to the house, and stop before the principal door : from it sprung the light and graceful form of a young woman, between sixteen and seventeen, who, half timidly half eagerly, tripped up the flight of steps, before her companion, an older and graver person, had finished the directions which,  
in

in a language meant to be English, she attempted to give the postillion as to the baggage the chaise was loaded with. The door, however, long unused to open, now remained closed against her, who would, could she have seen a servant, have asked for her father. It was Miss Falconberg, who had no recollection of her paternal house, and now looked around her with astonishment not unmixed with dismay. — Her companion having joined her expressed astonishment at their being made to wait at the door; and this surprise might have continued much longer, if the postillion had not found his way round to the offices, where he informed the housekeeper that two gentlewomen were without, who wanted to speak to his honour Sir Mordaunt.

A circumstance so unusual, and so unwelcome, occasioned a conference between the housekeeper and the steward; and after waiting near half an hour, the  
 ladies



ladies who expected admittance saw two figures in black slowly crossing the great court toward them. Miss Falconberg, amazed at the little alacrity there appeared to receive her, met them, and in a few words explained who she was; and that having been obliged to leave the convent in Flanders, where she had been brought up, on account of the troubles of the country, she had come to seek the protection of her father under the guidance of Mademoiselle Frettemeule, a sister of the religious house, who had kindly undertaken the charge of her.

The two domestics looked at each other, and still hesitated. They seemed unable to determine on what answer they were to give. The delay, however, could not last long, and the old steward coldly, and with apparent reluctance, led the way to another entrance of the house, saying that the great doors could not be opened. He directed the postillion to wait at the stables, while Edouarda

now

now having entered a room, and more and more amazed at her reception, could hardly acquire courage to say, "My father! My brother! Where are they? Why am I not to see them?"

The steward made a sign to the house-keeper that she should speak, who, placing herself directly before Edouarda, and curtsying, formally said:

"Truly, young lady, it is a grievous office for me and good Mr. Camus here—truly it is a grievous task—but it must be known, Sir Mordaunt is—"

"Is dead," interrupted Edouarda.—  
 "Is my father dead?"—"No, Miss, not dead: his honour is living, though in a poorish state of health; but we have had the misfortune, which you don't seem to know—the misfortune to lose—to lose—"

"Oh! keep me not in suspense," cried the trembling girl, "tell me what has happened."

"Why, we have had the great for-

row to lose our fine young master, Mr. Falconberg: he died beyond sea, where he went for his health, and was brought here to be buried about two months ago."

Edouarda had no power to interrupt her informer, who proceeded.

"Sir Mordaunt, Miss, have never held up his head since: and because that one day when Mr. Camus here spoke to his honour—didn't you, Mr. Camus?—saying how he hoped as he would be comforted, and such like, seeing as how we must all die and that, and hoping he would send for you, Ma'am, as his only child, to keep him company, and make up for his loss—Sir Mordaunt was in a perilous passion, and bade him, as he valued his place, never mention nothing of that there sort again: didn't he say so, Mr. Camus?"

Camus now seemed to have acquired courage to continue this painful narrative.

"Yes,

“ Yes, alas ! he did say so indeed ; and moreover, says he, I would have you from this time forward take notice that I have *no* child ; and that any servant who dares to interfere in my family concerns shall be discharged, says he, without more ado.”

“ So,” added the housekeeper, with even less apparent sympathy than had been shewn by the steward ; “ so you see, Miss, we be in consequence thereof very much at a nonplush how to act ; your ladyship’s coming all at once of a sudden so, puts us quite into a quandary ; and if so be as we take you in, and Sir Mordaunt should discover that we have done so without his orders, why it’s very like, I’ll assure you, that we shall all lose our places.”

“ If you take me in ?” cried Edouarda—“ And if you do not—Good God ! what is to become of me ?”—The eyes of the distressed Edouarda then sought comfort in the countenance of her companion ;

panion; but Mademoiselle Frette-meule was little disposed to give it: she was devoutly crossing herself, and, silently recommending herself to the protection of St. Barbara, St. Ursula, and St. Genevieve, together with Notre Dame de Carcassonne, and again wished herself back at her convent, from whence she had been driven by what hitherto she had not made up her mind to consider as a very lamentable event.

Mrs Gournay, the housekeeper, whose dismay increased as time wore away and no resolution was taken, now began to give advice, which she was afraid of offering till the silence and consternation of the two strangers convinced her they were themselves incapable of taking any resolution.

“If I might be so bold, young lady,” said she, “as to give my humble opinion, I should take the liberty for to say, that it might be very imprudent for to appear all at once, as it were, and of a sudden

a sudden afore his honour, seeing as he seems to be so grieved at heart about my late young master as to be sorry to see any other person as 'twere.—The blessed Lady give him patience, poor gentleman! though for fertain he have been but very mollencholie and cast down for many a year; the more is the pity. Now I would humbly mention to you, that if his honour does not know all of a minute that you are here, why we can tell him by little and little; whereas if we go for to tell him without some preamble, there is no saying how he may take it. This house is very large, and nobody never in it but Father Golgota and Father Galezza, both pious men, and very worthy of trust, and myself and Mr. Camus the steward, and the inferior sarvants, which is only an house-maid, a cook, and laundry-maid; and two men sarvants, trusty men, who have lived a many years with his honour: so that, if you please, Miss, you

and this gentlewoman may bide for the present without any one's being the wiser but me and the steward, and the housemaid, and she won't say a word about it; only when the reverend Father Golgota comes home, I must consult him thereon; for to be sure I would not upon no account whatsoever keep a secret from him. I'll try to be sure to make things as comfortable, and such like, as I can. Father Golgota will be back shortly, and both me and Mr. Camus are sure 'twill be preferable not as yet for to speak to Sir Mordaunt."

Since those tender affections which the expectation of meeting with her father had called forth in the bosom of Edouarda were now chilled by disappointment and apprehension, she readily assented to every thing the good woman proposed; who, after another short conference with the steward, dismissed the post-chaise, and soon after returned to shew the newly-arrived strangers into the

the apartments that she had destined for them.

These consisted of two bed-chambers, high and cold and forlorn, with old-fashioned high-testered beds. Each room was lighted by one long gothic window in a very thick wall; they looked into a square court, three sides of which were buildings; the light paved cloister formed the fourth, beyond which was an old plantation, chiefly of yew, fir, and cypress. The ivy which had sprung up among these trees had here and there found its way within, so as to mantle with its perennial leaves the fretted arches of the open cloister.

An anti-room to the bed-chambers, very large and lofty, was wainscoted half way up with Irish oak, above which the white-washed walls had no other ornaments than over one door an immense pair of antlers affixed to the carved head of a stag, all of which had formerly been gilt; the other door was adorned by a



great stuffed otter, whose muzzle and paws had once undergone the same operation, in testimony of the successful prowess of some former Falconberg, who had taken the animals to which these spoils belonged. The furniture of this room, which was to serve as a kind of sitting-room, consisted only of some old red leather chairs, with high backs and great brass nails, and a table covered with green plush, the voluted legs of which seemed to have been produced as a great effort of art two hundred and fifty years since. In the spacious and cave-like chimneys of these rooms, fires were lighted on brass dogs; but the wood was green, and the turf mingled with it served rather to smother than increase the little heat that was derived from it—and unfortunately the autumnal night was stormy and cold.

The austerities of a convent had not taken from Sister Rhoda the love of ease and personal indulgencies; she had been partly induced to undertake the journey  
which

which she had just finished, by what she had heard of the great affluence of Sir Mordaunt Falconberg; while from the general accounts she had listened to of England, she had imagined it to be a land abounding in gold and silver, and where, in the house of a grand *Milord* or *Seigneur*, such as she supposed Sir Mordaunt to be, all kind of gratifications, both of pride and of the palate, were to be obtained without effort or expence. Ideas like these had principally induced her to accompany Edouarda to England; for she was one of those beings who love themselves to the exclusion of all other friendship or affections whatever. But now, the contrast between what she expected and what she found was so mortifying, that it was not possible for her to resolve to conceal her ill-humour and vexation even from her young friend, who was undoubtedly the greatest sufferer.

Edouarda had a natural elasticity of

mind, and high health, hitherto unbroken by sorrow; for the distance at which she had been kept by her father had never appeared any thing extraordinary, since so many other young women were she knew just in the same situation, and even some who had parents in France. Now, therefore, as the first shock of hearing of her brother's death, and the disappointment of not immediately being received by her father, subsided, her spirits resumed their tone, and she endeavoured to persuade herself that the latter apparently cruel delay might be owing to the misplaced fears and misapprehension of the servants. It was, she believed, impossible that he could persist in refusing to receive such consolation as his only surviving child could offer, and doubted not that she should in a few days be allowed to throw herself at his feet. The disturbed mind of Edouarda, therefore, would soon have gained some degree of tranquillity, had she

she not been harassed by the murmurs of Sister Rhoda. This woman, weak and selfish by nature, ignorant and prejudiced from education, had supposed, that in quitting her spiritual aspirations, for which she had naturally very little predilection, she was to receive some of those terrestrial gratifications of which she had indulged many extravagant ideas, because she had from her infancy been told she was to form no ideas at all about them. Her half-informed mind, which had so long been occupied in making agreeable pictures for her imagination to gaze upon, now sunk in peevish despondence. Instead of palaces and regales, she thought her present accommodations less comfortable than use had made those of her cell; her unfortunate young companion, whom she had undertaken to protect, was made to suffer for her disappointment, and, weary as she was, compelled to listen to all the expressions of repentance and displeasure which the

nun could recollect in her own language. But the final consequence of this was perhaps good; for Edouarda, ever attentive to the feelings of others, and grateful for any service done to herself, she tried to forget her own concern, and thought only of alleviating that of her friend, whom she at length persuaded to retire to the best of the two beds, took a blanket from her own to make it more comfortable; and then, as the supper the housekeeper had supplied was not a bad one, the wine excellent, and some confections in brandy still better, Sister Rhoda, with a countenance rather less deplorable, retired to her repose, and postponed the rest of her lamentations till the next morning.

But for Edouarda there was no repose to be obtained: the fatigue of a long journey, sustained as she had been by the fond hope of meeting her father at the end of it, she would not have felt; but the shock of such a disappointment,  
and

and the mystery which hung about her reception, she could not recover. In painful astonishment she looked around her, and, surveying the desolate apartment, cold, dreary, and inhospitable, not much unlike, and not much better than some of the old inns where she had stopped for the night in French Flanders, she questioned herself whether the whole was not an uneasy dream, and whether it was possible that this was the house of Sir Mordaunt Falconberg? Yet it was not the discouraging appearance of the place that hurt her so much, as the dread that the servants seemed to have of her arrival being known to their master; and again and again Edouarda repeated, "Gracious Heaven! wherefore should my father refuse to see a child who never offended him? What shall I endure if I am long to remain concealed in his house like a culprit?"

An ardent desire then seized her to obtain a view of him by chance. It was

not yet very late; it was possible that Sir Mordaunt might be seen crossing from one room to another. Edouarda went to one of the windows. There was light enough through the night storm to enable her to distinguish that her chamber looked into a court surrounded on three sides by high buildings, while tall shrubs appeared to form the fourth boundary beyond an open cloister. She saw the spiral heads of the poplars and cypresses sway in the wind, and remarked how the early moon just glimmering on the park lawns beyond, was now and then obscured by dark clouds hurrying before the blast. About the buildings there was not even a gleam of light. Edouarda looked one by one on the high gothic windows: "Which," cried she, "gives its light to the apartment of my father?—Will no instinctive sense of my being near him awaken tenderness in his heart? Can I by no stratagem introduce myself to him, and arouse his parental feelings? Has any

one usurped in his bosom the place which surely must once have been occupied by his children, two of whom are in their graves, and has he yet no room for the third?"—Thus mournfully reflecting, and unable to sleep, Edouarda passed some time, till extreme weariness compelled her to seek in her cold and funereal-looking bed the rest which Nature imperiously demanded.

The morning came, but not to rejoice the pensive and unhappy Edouarda. Again she recalled what had passed the preceding day, and again wondered at her destiny. The housekeeper made her appearance while, she was dressing, and looked at her, she thought, with a mingled expression of sorrow for her and apprehension for herself, while she thus spoke :

"I hope, Miss, you've rested well. I made bold to come and look in upon you because t'other lady is not stirring ; and I hope you won't take it amiss, if so



be as I just venture to mention, that I hope you will be so good as to keep as close as you can for fear Sir Mordaunt should perceive any thing of your being here; which, until we can contrive by means of father Golgota to break the matter to him, might, to be sure, be attended with very bad consequences to us all."

"Do you mean then," said Edouarda, "my good woman, that it is necessary for me to be a prisoner?"

"Why, Miss, if so be as you be pleased to walk out at such times as there is no danger of meeting Sir Mordaunt—

"And when are those times?"

"Sir Mordaunt, Miss, is sometimes out early; that indeed is not very often: and at others he is not seen sometimes perhaps at all, and often not till two or three o'clock; and then of evenings he dismisses his own servant at dark, and after that nobody sees him."

"It is enough," said Edouarda sighing.

ing. "I shall probably have very little inclination to walk, while thus deprived of the comfort of seeing my father, and I will take care, while you think it necessary, not to intrude."

The woman cast on her what she thought seemed a look of compassion, and withdrew.

The extreme discontent in which Edouarda found Sister Rhoda, who will be better distinguished by the name of Mademoiselle Frettemeule, was infinitely more distressing to her than her own thoughts, however painful they had been. Instead of soothing the anguish which she could not but perceive corroded the heart of her young friend, she gave way to all the ill-humour this mortifying reception had occasioned; exclaimed against those who had betrayed her into a situation so insupportable, and condemned her own folly, which had suffered her to be so easily misled; declaring at the same time that millions should not bribe  
her

her to remain in a place where there was not one satisfaction to counterbalance the dismal and hopeless gloom. Edouarda implored her with tears not to leave her till she was under the protection of her father: and represented to her that, circumstanced as she now was, she had not the means of procuring the money which was necessary, in a country where they had found travelling so expensive, to transport her friend almost across the kingdom; for so the map informed her it was, from the north-eastern coast of Yorkshire to Amesbury in Wiltshire, where Mademoiselle Frette-meule had a near relation associated among the voluntary recluses who inhabited that place.

Not all the pleading of Edouarda could, however, appease the ill-humour which every circumstance around her continued to create in Mademoiselle Frette-meule, whose naturally peevish and selfish disposition, embittered by disappointment

pointment in the vague hopes she had formed, now seemed gratified by nothing so much as adding to the distress of the unhappy girl whom she had undertaken to protect—till at length Edouarda fled from her with as much solicitude as she would have sought her had she been of a different disposition. After three days which passed nearly as the first, and during which they were confined to the house, as well by the dread of Sir Mordaunt as by the inclemency of the weather, the murmurs of Mademoiselle Frettemeule became so loud, and her declarations of resolution to depart so peremptory, that Mrs. Gournay was apprehensive she would endeavour to explain them to Sir Mordaunt before either of the Priests returned home ; on whose influence the good old housekeeper greatly relied, knowing how much they possessed over herself. On the fourth day Gallezza arrived. He was closeted for above an hour with the housekeeper and steward,

steward, and then walked slowly and softly into the room where Edouarda and the quondam nun waited to see him.

Edouarda had been used to see monks of every description before her arrival in England ; yet she looked on Galezza with surprise. He was a man of about thirty-six, tall, pale, meagre. His grey eyes expressed passions which had nothing to do with the sanctity he professed. His black eye-brows, hair, and beard shaded a long bony face, which a high nose and prominent chin rendered singular ; yet he was not so ugly as such an assemblage of features might seem in description to make him ; and when he smiled, though it was often,

“ As if he mock’d himself, and scorn’d his spirit  
 “ That could be mov’d to smile at any thing,”

yet now and then a look indicating better and more social feelings dwelt for a moment on his odd countenance, and, like a ray of light amidst the *lond at-*  
*mople etc*

mosphere of winter, seemed to say, that, though a Jesuit, Galezza had not always been insensible to the voice of Nature and Humanity.

Mademoiselle Frettemeule, as soon as the first short compliments were over, entered with great volubility on a discourse in her native language, wherein all she had expected was detailed, and the contrast she had experienced vehemently insisted upon. She concluded an oration of great length, by declaring to the priest her decided resolution to depart immediately; adding in a very determined tone, that should any one attempt to prevent her, she would force herself into the presence of Sir Mordaunt, and demand of him retribution and dismissal.

Edouarda heard her with terror; Edouarda had not yet learned, that, for those who are miserable, every thing that materially changes has a probability of ameliorating their condition; and that  
nothing

nothing is so idle as for those to fear evil who have no hope of good.

The Confessor Galezza looked on the querulous nun while she spoke with eyes of peculiar meaning, which sometimes however were diverted to the fairer and more interesting face of Edouarda, whose deep and almost convulsive sighs seemed to make him attend to her in despite of his efforts to appease her more importunate companion. To the surprise however of Edouarda, the reverend Father rather acquiesced in than opposed the departure of Mademoiselle Fretteville ; seemed to advise in cold and measured language her not waiting for the return of his superior ; which was, he said, extremely uncertain, inasmuch as he was attending a lady of high rank in a lingering hopeless illness. Galezza added, that since Mademoiselle was so very uneasy in her present uncertainty, he would consult with Mr. Camus, and endeavour to arrange every thing, so that she might immediately

mediately begin her journey. He would himself, he said, attend her to the next post-town, where he would provide the means of her proceeding to join the community she so earnestly desired to belong to.

The father retired, and Edouarda had no courage to remonstrate with Rhoda on her unkind resolution. So much indeed had her distress been increased by the discontent and ill-humour of her companion, that she hardly knew whether she wished her to stay. One benefit Edouarda had already derived from the disappointment she had recently experienced—she had learned to depend less on others, and more on herself: as the limbs acquire strength and firmness by exercise, the soul gains fortitude and resolution from the necessity that compels it to act and to endure.

Edouarda was already in some degree conscious of this. She wondered that she had been able within a few hours to  
suffer



house; and that she should not continue in the comfortless state she now submitted to. The housekeeper, however, who appeared to have redoubled her vigilance since the departure of Mademoiselle Frettemeule, left her very little time to meditate alone on the steps she should take; for, as if the good woman had been aware of her thoughts, and was determined to prevent whatever resolution she had formed upon them, Mrs. Gournay continually besieged her. Edouarda, though fatigued and vexed at being under the necessity of hearing the silly and sometimes superstitious gossip of this old woman, endeavoured notwithstanding to make an advantage of it, and questioned her as to many particulars in regard to her father: at what time he went out? whether he dined at any particular house? who had access to him, and at what time? Mrs. Gournay replied to many of these questions in a way which informed Edouarda of very little

little that she wanted to know ; but she at length imagined she had collected, that Sir Mordaunt was usually out at an early hour of the morning, alone and unattended ; that he always returned before ten o'clock ; and that his servants frequently knew not when he went out or came in—except that they sometimes saw him at a distance in the fields or park, when, in obedience to his orders, they sedulously avoided him.

On the strength of this intelligence, and after a night which was not passed in sleep, (but in imagining various addresses to her father, and arming herself with resolution to encounter the first sight of him, and the first sound of his voice,) Edouarda arose with the earliest dawn of the morning. She had now been ten days the inmate of her father's house : and this was the first time she had attempted to go without its walls. Trembling and doubting whether she should not render her comfortless state  
still

still more so by the measure she had determined upon, she dressed herself in that haste and trepidation which fear generally occasions, yet recollected as she was about it, that as Sir Mordaunt was said to be strongly attached to the ceremonies of the religion to which his family had always been devoted, her appearing before him in the habit of a nun during the year of her noviciate might give him an impression in her favour. Such a dress she was in possession of, having worn it on her journey through Flanders by the command of the Abbess, who imagined it would be a protection against the insults she had been taught to apprehend. Edouarda, who fancied she had gained a step towards her father's heart, now put on her novice's robe and veil with more satisfaction than they had ever bestowed on her before; and with still greater satisfaction found the doors were not shut on the side of the house she inhabited. She  
 passed

passed softly through several gloomy rooms and long passages, her heart fluttering like a frightened bird: for she knew not, at every step, whether the next door she opened might not lead her suddenly into the presence of her father. At length, however, she found a staircase, and came to a great brick hall, one end of which a woman was employed in cleaning; but her back was towards the affrighted Edouarda, who hastened to pass her, and gained a sort of porch, from whence an already opened door let her into the park. She fled across it as if she had been actually pursued, well knowing that had the house-keeper or some other of the servants seen her, she would have been compelled to return. Mrs. Gournay had told her that Sir Mordaunt usually took his walks in the fields beyond the park. To the fields therefore she endeavoured to hasten, though she was ignorant which among the fading woods, that every way sur-

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rounded her, were in the park, and which were beyond its paling.

A winding walk through a thick copse promised her concealment, and she thought probably led to some gate. Her conjectures were justified; for, after almost half an hour's walking, a park stile offered itself, and she entered a green lane, where no carriage seemed to have passed, since the turf covered the few marks of ruts which were yet to be traced. None of the usual sounds of rustic labour met the ear; the morning was grey and heavy; and scarce the remaining leaves, now deeply touched with autumnal yellow, trembled in the gale which usually attends the rising sun. Old oaks stretched their horizontal arms, almost meeting each other, across the unfrequented way which Edouarda now pursued—pursued merely because she had once entered upon it; for the solitude of the place, and the fear she felt at being quite alone so far from every habitation,

habitation, had again sunk her courage so much, that she was conscious she could not have spoken to her father had she met him. Once she had resolved to return; but the dread of being chidden by Mrs. Gournay, and suffering for an abortive attempt, urged her on. A gate on the opposite side from the park opened to a stubble field, which rose so much above the ground she had left, that, imagining she could command a view from it without being perceived, she entered it. There was a path which had certainly been trodden by human feet. It lay along under an hedgerow of oak and beech for five or six hundred yards, and then, as Edouarda plainly discerned, stretched across the field to its summit, which she wished to gain, believing she could look from thence over her father's domain, and perhaps perceive the sea, which she knew was within a very few miles. Having satisfied her curiosity, she had

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A winding walk through a thick copse promised her concealment, and she thought probably led to some gate. Her conjectures were justified; for, after almost half an hour's walking, a park stile offered itself, and she entered a green lane, where no carriage seemed to have passed, since the turf covered the few marks of ruts which were yet to be traced. None of the usual sounds of rustic labour met the ear; the morning was grey and heavy; and scarce the remaining leaves, now deeply touched with autumnal yellow, trembled in the gale which usually attends the rising sun. Old oaks stretched their horizontal arms, almost meeting each other, across the unfrequented way which Edouarda now pursued—pursued merely because she had once entered upon it; for the solitude of the place, and the fear she felt at being quite alone so far from every habitation,

habitation, had again sunk her courage so much, that she was conscious she could not have spoken to her father had she met him. Once she had resolved to return; but the dread of being chidden by Mrs. Gournay, and suffering for an abortive attempt, urged her on. A gate on the opposite side from the park opened to a stubble field, which rose so much above the ground she had left, that, imagining she could command a view from it without being perceived, she entered it. There was a path which had certainly been trodden by human feet. It lay along under an hedgerow of oak and beech for five or six hundred yards, and then, as Edouarda plainly discerned, stretched across the field to its summit, which she wished to gain, believing she could look from thence over her father's domain, and perhaps perceive the sea, which she knew was within a very few miles. Having satisfied her curiosity, she had



determined to go back to the house, and assign such reasons as occurred to her for her early ramble; for of meeting Sir Mordaunt she now despaired. Pursuing therefore the path for a few paces, she was suddenly startled by seeing close to her, and leaning over a gate in the hedge-row, a man, who at one glance she saw was not her father, for he was young, and had the appearance of a sportsman: a net full of game hung at his side, and he had a gun in his hand. Edouarda alarmed, though she hardly knew why, would have retreated; then thought it would be better to pass on, while the sportsman would probably pursue his game: but she forgot how singular an appearance in England any woman must make dressed as she was; and she was totally unconscious of the attractions of that youth and beauty, which would have made her in any dress an object of curiosity and admiration.

The

The young man, as if afraid the fair but strange figure he saw would escape him before he could ascertain if it was real or visionary, sprang over the gate, and approached her. "Forgive me, Madam," cried he, speaking as if he feared the lovely apparition would vanish into air; "forgive me if I take the liberty of asking—" Edouarda looked terrified. "I know," added the stranger, taking her trembling hand, "I know it is unusual to address a lady one has not the honour of being acquainted with; but your appearance in this remote place excites my surprise, as much as your form does my admiration. Pray, be not offended if I ask you who you are?—from whence you come?"

This was the first time Edouarda had heard an inquiry she so little knew how to answer. The distressing circumstance of being in her father's house unknown to him; of having now come out of it clandestinely to seek him, occurred to her.

Her confusion increased, and the astonished inquirer repeated his question: "Perhaps," said he, "you think me impertinent; I am afraid I am so: but it is impossible for me to part with you without knowing who you are, and whether there is any chance of my ever seeing you again?"

"I live," replied Edouarda in a low and tremulous voice, "I live at the house of Sir Mordaunt Falconberg." The countenance of the stranger fell: "I might have guessed at that," said he, "from your habit. Sir Mordaunt Falconberg! Has he then the recluse of both sexes in his house? Is it become a monastery?" Edouarda had by this time recollected many additional reasons that made her shrink from the curiosity she had thus excited: yet, when she would have repulsed it, her courage totally failed her. "Whatever I am, Sir, or by whatever means I am here, I entreat you to let me pass: it cannot benefit  
you

you to detain me ; to me it may be of the most fatal consequence.”

“ I would not hurt you for a thousand worlds !” cried the young man. “ But what harm can happen from your telling me who you are ? You are so very unlike any being I expected to have seen here, that had I not beheld your face, and heard you speak, I should have imagined you to be one of the female ghosts which the country people believe are the only inhabitants of Palsgrave—besides Sir Mordaunt himself and two or three monks——But if you *are* a sprite, you must at least bring with you airs from heaven ! Speak to me, therefore, beautiful Nun !” Edouarda still struggled to get away. “ Oh ! no, no ; by Heavens,” exclaimed he with increasing impetuosity, “ I shall be mad if you refuse to tell me who you are !” Edouarda now recollected that it was possible her father, so dreaded already, might see her in conference with this

E 4                      stranger.

stranger. He did not seem to be acquainted with Sir Mordaunt. The risk, therefore, of telling her name might be less than that she might incur by his detaining her. "I know not, Sir," said she, "the customs of England, nor how they may authorise your treating me in this manner; but it is at least cruel, when I tell you that it exposes me to very great inconvenience. Since, however, you take so unhandsome an advantage of my unprotected situation at this moment, I must induce you to release me by telling you that I am the daughter of Sir Mordaunt Falconberg, and now unfortunately his only child. Late events on the Continent have driven me from the convent where I was educated, and I have been only a very short time an inmate of my father's house. Now, Sir, you must give me leave to return to it; I am expected—it is impossible for me to stay—I must hasten home."

"And when you get thither, most  
lovely

lovely Miss Falconberg, for heaven's sake let the first thing you do be to divest yourself of this dress, which, though you look like an angel in it, you should never wear to put your father in mind of compelling you to bury in a cloister charms that would adorn a throne, and surely are destined to make for some happy—oh, thrice happy being, a paradise upon earth ! Do not, for mercy's sake, leave me ! Suffer me only to accompany you to the park pales. Tell me, do you often walk out ? At what hour do you usually leave the house ? What probability is there of my seeing you once more ?” — “ None,” cried Edouarda ; “ I never leave the house, I dare not ; my father—” Her voice faltered, and she could with difficulty articulate, “ Now I do most earnestly entreat you to leave me, unless you would be my most cruel enemy, unless you would destroy me !” — “ Perish the world rather !” answered the young man ; “ but

is it to be endured that the old necromancer of the Abbey should tyrannically immure such beauty and sweetness? I will alarm the country," added he smiling, "I will call the posse comitatus, and besiege his fortrefs."—"You will kill me," exclaimed Edouarda, now ready to sink to the earth.—"No, indeed," said her persecutor, "only tell me when I may see you again, and—" Edouarda now suddenly wrested from him the hand he had continued to hold; and casting on him an imploring look not to follow her, she hastened into the wood in the park through which she had before passed.

Edouarda had advanced almost half a mile through the wood, still looking back at every step she took, before her mind was sufficiently disengaged from the terror she had undergone to advert to that she had yet to encounter. But, as she approached the house, the fears which she had felt in leaving it again as-

1

failed

failed her: "I have failed, I have completely failed in my hopes, and have put myself in the power of a stranger; now, if the housekeeper should see and question me, or if I should be perceived by my father, what would become of me?" So great was the agitation this soliloquy occasioned, that her breath and the power of moving onward had almost forsaken the unhappy Edouarda; nor would she perhaps have acquired resolution to attempt entering the house, if the woman servant who usually waited in her room, but who was generally more like a statue than a living woman, had not hastily advanced towards her across the narrow lawn between the house and the surrounding wood. Her countenance expressed that she was under the impulse of fear. "Oh, Miss," cried she, "where have you been? Had Mrs. Gournay seen you, you would have got me so much anger for having left your door and the others open! She has been busy



in getting some things for Sir Mordaunt, who is sick, and luckily for us both she has not missed you; but I, for my part, have been frightened out of my senses.— O dear me, what is to be done now? Step back, Miss, step back into the wood, pray do, and just change clothes with me; I can creep round a way you will never find, wrapped up any how; but if you are seen dressed as you are crossing the park, and just too under Sir Mordaunt's window, we shall none of us stay in the house three days longer."

Ah! thought Edouarda, who would wish to stay in it subjected to such alarms? She however hesitated not to do as Rachael desired, and was soon equipped in her hat, gown, and check apron, while the nun's robe and veil were thrown over the maid like an handkerchief and cloak, and she ran a contrary way, by which she said it was easy for *her* to go unnoticed to the  
 2 house,

house, and Edouarda was left to make her way thither as well as she could.

Hardly dared she look up to the windows, as she passed under those which she had just been told were in the apartments usually inhabited by her father; yet her ardent desire to see him, and the hope she had of being unnoticed in such a disguise, gave her courage to raise her head, and she perceived standing at one of the great old gloomy-looking casements a figure, which she imagined was Sir Mordaunt. Soon, however, the person moved away; and as if it were possible Sir Mordaunt could have discovered that she was not what she appeared to be, Edouarda hurried more alarmed than ever into the house, and, without meeting any one, found herself in her own chamber.

There, while she congratulated herself upon her escape, and resolved never again to hazard the terrors she had undergone, Rachael came to her, and took  
back

back her clothes. At the same time she appeared in great anxiety: "Ah! Miss," said she, "what shall I do about Father Galezza? When confession day comes for us servants, what shall I do? for I declare I had almost rather jump into the fire than tell the father: then, to be sure, he will set me such a penance as never was the like, and nobody can tell what it will end in."

Edouarda inquired in what respect she thought herself so much to blame? "To blame, Miss?" replied the girl. "Why, it was my fault for leaving of the doors open, contrary to the orders both of Mrs. Gournay, Mr. Camus, and Father Galezza.—'Twas my carelessness, to be sure; and oh, blessed Jesu! what a fright I was in when I found, upon coming to make your bed, that you was gone out! And if any harm had come of it, I must have answered for it, as indeed I must now to Father Galezza, and undergo a sharp penance too besides."

It

It now occurred to Edouarda that she could perhaps make a friend of this woman, who might hereafter be useful to her. The very idea of any one interested for her, and taking part in her destiny, offered something like comfort. She therefore endeavoured to conciliate her by sympathising in her distress:—"Is then the father so harsh?" said Edouarda. "Surely, my good Rachael, he will never inflict any severe punishment for an error which is in itself so trifling, and which can be attended with no bad consequences. I would not for the world have you omit one of the most immaterial circumstances in your confession; but no doubt the father will absolve you—and accept this, good Rachael, as a small token of my concern that you should suffer even a fear on my account."

The girl hesitated a moment, as if the receiving the money Edouarda offered would be an addition to the evil deeds  
that

that already weighed upon her conscience; then recollecting perhaps some maxim of the father himself, which she thought there was a good opportunity to follow, she curtsied, and pocketed the guinea, recommending it to Edouarda not to say a word to Mrs. Gournay which might lead to a discovery of what had passed; and allowing no farther time for the questions which Edouarda was very desirous of making, she hurried away.

Then it was that Edouarda began to reflect on the occurrence of the morning, and to re-consider what the stranger had said.—He had spoken of her father as if he was an object of abhorrence in the neighbourhood, and the freedom with which he had addressed her, was far from giving her a favourable impression of the stranger himself; while a thousand apprehensions that her interview might be known to Sir Mordaunt, and increase the dislike he had to her, made her

her reflect on the whole circumstance with pain. Alone, and without books or any resource, the oppression of her mind was almost insupportable; and after two or three days more thus passed, solitude and solicitude preyed on her mind; the want of air and exercise affected her personal health, and she thought herself certainly sinking into the grave. That elasticity of spirit which had hitherto supported her, forsook her; she trembled at every noise, fancying she heard Sir Mordaunt in one of those furious passions which had been described to her, and that she was herself the object that excited it. All her conversations with Mrs. Gournay, and with Rachael, served only to depress her spirits more: they appeared more cold and gloomy than before; they spoke of the expected arrival of the two priests as near at hand, when the whole house was to be put under a new and severe discipline. Mrs. Gournay informed Edouarda it  
would

would be proper that she should prepare herself for confession, and put her conscience entirely under the direction of these good men, submitting herself implicitly to their direction. Edouarda trembled at the idea, though the innocence and purity of her mind could be equalled by nothing but the misfortunes which so undeservedly overwhelmed her.

Among the acquaintance she had formed in the convent was a Miss Hervey, an English woman, about seven-and-twenty, possessed a very strong and clear understanding, and had enjoyed the advantage of very extensive reading. Reduced by the circumstances of her father, who had lost his fortune in the war with America, to become a teacher of young persons, she had very wisely placed herself at a convent, to obtain the qualifications necessary for instructing others in French, and fine works; resisted and treated with contempt the efforts that had been made, on her first residing there, to induce

induce her to change her religion, she had been suffered afterwards to remain unmolested on the subject. Edouarda was particularly the object of her notice and affection, not only as a native of the same country, but because of the sweetness and simplicity of her temper and character. The Superior of the Convent died, and her successor, much less a bigot, did not seem to recollect that the orders given in regard to Miss Falconberg were very ill observed, when she was suffered to be so much with her country-woman, a Protestant. Edouarda had a penetrating and inquiring mind; she had been a sufferer in her infancy from the austerities of her religion; she was now disgusted by its mummery, and by that pretence to superior virtue which she observed among persons who were devoured by every odious passion which they could indulge. The conversation of Miss Hervey had completed what her own natural good sense began;



began ; and in fact Edouarda had long ceased to be a Catholic of the Romish Church, though still under the cruel necessity of undergoing forms, and assisting at ceremonies, from which her heart and her reason equally revolted.

The scene she was now in was not likely to reconcile her to those harsh and gloomy prejudices, to which she owed all her distress, and which appeared to her to have banished her from the protection and the heart of her father. But, forlorn as she now felt herself, her actual situation was infinitely less uneasy than that to which she looked forward when the two priests should return, before whose austerity and bigotry the ignorant and unresisting votaries in the house appeared to tremble. How could she endure the arrogant and peremptory manner in which they demanded implicit obedience? How evade the scrutinizing zeal, either real or pretended, with which her principles would  
be

be examined; or the humiliations to which her want of enthusiasm, or of hypocrisy, might expose her? Far from these ecclesiastics being the means of reconciling her to her father, there was every reason to apprehend that their interest would direct them to keep her at a distance from him. The little she had seen of Galezza had given her the most unfavourable impression of him; and from all she had collected of the austere character of the Italian, he would be yet more formidable. Both might be expected every hour, and it was probable the first consultation they held would decide on her fate; a fate perhaps insupportable, and which there appeared to be no way of avoiding, unless she could succeed before their arrival in opening the heart of her father to sentiments of parental love.

The attempt to see him having once failed, all that related to it was now doubly arduous. Her spirits too were  
dejected,

dejected, and her health enfeebled ; yet the apprehension that the priests would soon close every avenue against her, and the conviction that she could not be more unfortunate if she failed, than if she neglected to avail herself of the little time she had left, at length decided her. On returning from her luckless excursion she had remarked the apartments which were inhabited by Sir Mordaunt, and thought that if there was a suite of rooms, or a gallery, beyond a door which opened to one side of her own, it must lead to that end of the house where he lived. Mrs. Gournay had told her he was ill ; it was unlikely then that he was out, and perhaps the weakness of his frame might soften the asperity of his temper.—It was worth the trial.

Edouarda, still believing that any appearance of adhering to the rules of a religious order would be a circumstance in her favour in the opinion of Sir Mordaunt, again put on her nun's dress,  
and

and listening for near an hour with great attention to the noises about the house, and watching for the lights, she believed every one was asleep save him she wished to see. From the apartments now known to be his, she thought a faint light was reflected on an opposite wall, and now with tremulous hands she began to try if she could open the doors that were between them.

The first lock which she attempted turned with very little difficulty ; but by the taper she held she saw that the room it opened into was full of spare furniture and lumber. Great old-fashioned chairs, chests, and bedsteads were promiscuously huddled upon one other ; with frames without pictures, and pictures without frames ; escutcheons of all sizes and descriptions, and pieces of old statues, which seemed once to have been held in greater veneration, and to have been objects of adoration. One of these was a crucifix, either of stone or wood,  
painted

painted nearly to resemble an human body, and as large as life\*. Edouarda had been accustomed to contemplate such representations; yet by the dim light she held, and amid so many objects rendered doubtful by the obscurity they were involved in, it made her shudder. She passed however under it to open the door against which it partly leaned, and found herself in a matted passage; and now she trembled at her own footsteps, as slowly she crept along it, and even her breathing and the pulsation of her arteries were, from the profound silence, so distinctly heard, that she fancied they must be equally audible to others, should this avenue lead to any other part of the house. It became wider and higher.—The floor was still covered with matting, and here and there against the wall was

\* This representation formerly very frequent in France on eminences or on quays, and sometimes here several roads met, is called un Calvaire.

an iron sconce made to hold a candle. At length one side of the passage broke into arches, and the chapel appeared below it, while the continuation of the passage or gallery where Edouarda stood went quite round to the organ-loft on the opposite side.

Fear of she hardly knew what, besides the dread mingled with hope that she should meet her father, now so entirely overcame the trembling inquirer, that she had no courage to go towards the organ. A strange apprehension of some fearful shape, concealed beneath the dark curtain that surrounded it, suddenly struck her; and abandoning her project for that night, she turned to hasten back by the way she came. The door by which she had entered the gallery was open, and fearfully she cast her eyes through it on the impenetrable gloom of the rooms she had before passed. As she hesitated a moment, almost doubting whether again to explore them, a deep and long-drawn sigh

seemed to come from the other extremity of the passage, which she perceived led a great deal farther in an opposite direction from that which she had before followed. Terror, such as Edouarda had never been conscious of before, now seized her; she plunged into the dark labyrinth which she had feared a second time to pass, and with no other care than that her candle should not be extinguished, hastened as much as the nature of the incumbered rooms would admit to regain her own apartment.

Having reached it, and shut the door she had before been so anxious to open, Edouarda began with herself all those arguments that are usual in such cases; fancy, the wind, some accidental noise, all were called upon to account for her alarm, but all to very little purpose. The low moan, or rather hollow and broken sigh, still painfully recurred to her; and though she crept trembling to her bed, her eyes were frequently directed to the door where she thought the

spectre or strange being which had uttered it would perhaps appear.—At another the hope that she had discovered the means of seeing her father would have supported her, or she would have persuaded herself that it was his voice she had heard; but dread at this moment entirely counteracted those efforts which reason would have made to re-assure her, and it was long before her fears would suffer her to taste any repose.

Sleep at last relieved her; and when she awoke on the entrance of Rachael the next morning, the day was bright, and the sun shed his soul-cheering influence even among the gloomy walls and obscured casements of Palsgrave. Edouarda heard the voice of a fellow-being speaking to her with kindness. She opened the windows, and felt the breath of morning blowing pure and refreshing from the neighbouring hills; and the horrors of the preceding night were half forgotten, while her desire to see and be



received by her father returned in all its force.

It was certain that she now knew a way by which she might have access to him, for she was sure that he was regularly at mass; nay, that his room opened into some part of the building in which it was performed, from whence he might hear it when he was too ill to go down into the chapel. It would therefore be easy, could she once again summon resolution, to make her way through the avenue she had thus discovered, and throw herself at her father's feet, even at the altar. Surely he would not in such a moment spurn from him an only child, earnestly attempting to awaken his affection.

Edouarda, much as she had seen of the petrifying powers of bigotry, had yet no idea of the change it can make in the human heart.

Seated at her work at the only window she was suffered to approach, she

was

was arguing on her future plans, and endeavouring to conquer all her remaining recollections of the horror occasioned by the past, when, casting her eyes towards the cloister which divided the court from the park, she saw the two priests in deep conference together: and all she had heard from Rachael of the confession which would be strictly demanded from every inhabitant of the house recurred to her with a sensation very wide of satisfaction; for to relate what she had done with a view to see her father, would effectually put it in their power to prevent her ever seeing him at all. Rachael soon after came into the room to tell her that both the holy men were returned; and before she had time to rally her confused thoughts, they entered together.

Galezza was humble and silent—Golgota, an older and a different sort of man, said but little, but what he did say was severe and sententious: he inquired of Edouarda the rules by which her

confessor in the convent she had left had directed her; seemed to think the discipline had been too lax, and that the young penitent had not been sufficiently instructed. While Galezza therefore questioned her on some points by his desire, and the trembling Edouarda was collecting all her presence of mind to answer him so as not to incur some severe penance, Golgota surveyed her with looks, which, though she remarked, she dared not interpret; and the unpleasant conversation ended in his bidding her prepare for a general confession previous to the solemn celebration of what is called in France, "*Le Jour des Morts*\*, " now very nearly approaching.—These directions being given in an authoritative tone by Golgota, he took his coadjutor aside, walked up and down the room with him several times conversing in a low voice, and in Spanish,

\* November 2d, All Souls, when prayers are put up for the dead

which

which Edouarda did not understand; and then the elder repeating to her in a solemn and nasal tone what he had before said, they departed together, leaving on the mind of Edouarda an impression it is not easy to describe. When, however, she had time to consider, this painful impression in some degree subsided. She hoped that the return of these men would bring some decision, and that she should either be received through their means by her father, or that they would advise her how to bestow herself, and contrive some means for her support. Edouarda had not yet learned how little superstition and bigotry have to do with humanity and morality; nor how many hypocrites, insensible to the two last of these qualities, acquire ascendancy over the minds of men by the two first.

Sir Mordaunt had indeed been for many years completely priest-ridden.—The violence of his passions had plunged

him into errors, which the weakness of his understanding made him believe these governors of his conscience could teach him to wipe away ; yet was he so far from obtaining that internal peace which only conscious rectitude can give, that his terrors increased in proportion to the domination of the men he trusted ; and while life became every day more and more burthenfome to him, he every hour considered its termination with greater difmay.

Edouarda, sanguine in her natural difpofition, though depreffed by the comfortlefs circumftances ſhe was in, again recovered refolution enough to purfue her former projects ; and having half perfuaded herſelf out of the viſionary terrors of the preceding night, ſhe reſolved to adventure once more to explore at leaſt the chapel, and the paſſages around it. As ſoon, therefore, as ſhe had finiſhed her dinner, and diſmiſſed Rachael, ſhe ſummoned all her fortitude,

titude, and fastening the door that communicated with the house, that nobody might enter from thence and miss her, she crossed, not without some palpitation of the heart, the rooms through which she had passed the night before. The bright morning had disappeared in a cold and gloomy afternoon; it was already dusk, and through the broken shutters only was any light admitted to guide her way. The matted gallery was not much lighter; but with soft step she crept towards the arches, through which the whole area of the chapel was to be distinguished.

With astonishment and terror Edouarda beheld kneeling before the altar a female figure wrapped in a long white woollen garment, like that worn by some religious orders. Unable to move from the spot where amazement had fixed her, Edouarda, fearing to breathe, continued for some time to gaze. A deep and broken sigh, resembling what she had be-

fore heard, proceeded from the phantom (for such only could she believe it to be). With arms raised as in the attitude of earnest supplication, and then pressed as in agony to her breast, the figure remained a second or two; and, again deeply sighing, arose from her knees, and slowly disappeared in the gloom which the fretwork of a sort of gothic screen threw over that side of the building.

Edouarda's eyes still remained fixed on the obscurity through which the shape had vanished, and it was a moment before she was collected enough to ask herself what or who this could be.—That it was some supernatural appearance her good sense would not allow her on reflection to believe, yet the height and general appearance of the form was totally unlike every female in the house. From this vague and confused inquiry of the moment, Edouarda was roused by fancying she heard footsteps slowly approach

proach along in the matted gallery.—Variety of terrors then assailed her: she at once dreaded the re-appearance of the unknown person or spectre, and the detection of those who were interested in watching her, and almost instinctively hurried through the deserted rooms, not daring to close the doors after her, and fearing either to look behind her, lest the fearful penitent of the altar should glide after her; and yet dreading to find some one with hostile countenance waiting for her, who would reproach, and perhaps punish the curiosity that had led her from her room. The two monks were, above all, objects of her apprehensions; and as she crept through every door, she figured to herself one of them waiting to seize her, and confine her with menaces and remonstrances to her own apartment.

She arrived there, however, unmolested but by her own fears; and, gasping for breath, wondered as she fastened



the last door after her what could have engaged her a second time to leave it. The figure she had seen, and for whose appearance it was impossible for her to account, haunted her imagination incessantly. She fancied she saw it floating along the dark end of her room, or standing at the most distant door, and, if she slept for a moment, started suddenly at the idea that it was at the foot of her bed; while she dreaded to undraw her curtain, lest it should there again present itself. It happened that Mrs. Gournay attended instead of Rachael to take away her candle, and fasten the door; and as she seemed in one of those silent and sullen humours which Edouarda had by this time observed were frequent with her, it was hazardous or useless to venture asking any of those questions which might give her some light on the subject ever in her thoughts. An unquiet night was followed by a day as much disturbed. Though she could not  
expel

expel what she had seen a moment from her mind, still it resisted the idea of any thing supernatural; for though brought up in the very bosom of superstition, Edouarda had never heeded the tales with which idleness and ignorance occupy the otherwise listless hours of existence. Yet how was it possible to account for what she had beheld, since certainly there was no woman who ostensibly inhabited the house at all like the figure that had presented itself before the altar of the chapel?

Another day passed, and Edouarda, far from again yielding to the impulse that had urged her to explore the apartments which she supposed to be inhabited by her father, dared hardly turn her eyes towards that entrance to her room, and occupied herself more than once, in trying whether the door was as secure within side as it could be made.

Towards evening, making this examination for the last time, Edouarda was  
startled

startled by a noise which she had never remarked before. She listened, not without dread, but soon distinguished it to be the voice of one or other of the priests singing vespers. This convinced her that she had not closed all the doors between her room and the avenue to the chapel, in her last precipitate retreat. But strong as her fears were that this might lead to a detection of her attempts, they did not give her resolution to pass that way again; and an undescrivable terror, which she felt to be greater than the occasion ought to have impressed, had taken uncontrollable possession of her mind.

To add to this, Rachael, who now resumed her attendance, gave her a strange vague account of a man, a stranger, who was supposed to have no good design, that had frequently been met in the park, and disappeared in a very extraordinary manner, before it was possible for any of those who had seen him to ascertain who

or what he was. Had not the other equivocal shape been ever present to Edouarda, she would probably have given but little attention to this story, but her spirits were in a state that made her tremblingly attentive to every thing; and when Rachael, in answer to her questions, began to describe the person who had been thus seen, it suddenly occurred to Edouarda, that his appearance resembled that of the young man who, addressing her in her walk, had so much alarmed her. Numberless vague conjectures then passed through her mind. Surely this rash and strange young man (of whom she had thought very little since her fears of her walk having been discovered had subsided) could never have undertaken the strange project of introducing himself into the house, and appearing as a woman? Yet if so wild a plan had occurred to him, it would not be in the chapel where the priests resorted so constantly that he  
would

would seek her clandestinely, and at an hour too when it was very improbable she would be found there. This conjecture seemed therefore too absurd to be long dwelt upon. But that the park visitor might be her transient acquaintance did not seem very unlikely, when she recollected the vehement asseverations he had made, that he must and would see her again.

Edouarda therefore, though she felt not the least partiality for the stranger she had casually met, and but for the fear he had occasioned her would hardly have remembered, was by no means easy when she heard, that orders had been given by Golgota, to the park-keeper, to take out the blood-hounds, and endeavour to discover the haunt of this intruder, who the father strongly suspected had a design against either the fish or the game; for he had once been observed by the vigilant ecclesiastic himself, who being (no doubt bidding  
his

his beads) in the willow wood, which crowded over the great pond, had unexpectedly beheld an unknown person dart across the narrow green path, leading to the dairy farm at the extremity of the park; and had also once seen one, who he thought was the same man, suddenly emerge from the dark shrubs near the cloister, and hurry across the turf into another holt of trees, with a velocity which the father so much despaired of equalling, that, though it was moonlight, and the supposed marauder was distinctly seen, he did not choose to follow him. He apprehended however Sir Mor-daunt's wild fowl, fish, and venison to be in danger of diminution; while Edouarda, hearing of his fears, apprehended that the supposed robber might have a very different object of pursuit, and she felt from that supposition greater disquiet than could easily be described.

The alarm, however, like every other of the kind, died away, and was almost forgotten.

forgotten. Nothing was missing about the house and grounds—the park-keeper could trace nobody with his blood-hounds—and Edouarda had soon no other disquiet than that of preparing for her confession, which was now very soon to be made.

Under pretence of instructing her, and preparing her for this, Galezza took frequent occasions of visiting her. He not only questioned her on the rules enjoined her in the convent, with which he appeared to be by no means satisfied, but expressed some doubts as to the principles she had acquired there; and her wavering and doubtful answers on points which he thought the most material, led him at length to inquire who were then her particular friends and most intimate acquaintance; and Edouarda having acknowledged (what she suspected Galezza had already heard from Sister Rhoda) that a Miss Harvey, an Englishwoman, and a Protestant, had been her favourite

favourite companion, he deplored in very energetic terms the dangerous state into which his penitent had fallen, and declared it to be absolutely necessary that, under the directions of Father Gologota, he should put her into a new course of discipline.—Edouarda's heart sunk within her. Surely the penance she was already condemned to was sufficient. A stranger in her father's house, depending on the will of persons who were themselves interested dependants, without one friend to whom she might apply for counsel, one bosom on which she might repose, and uncertain what was to be her future fate, it seemed to be a dreadful aggravation of her sufferings, if she were now to be condemned, at the mercy of a priest, to undergo personal punishment for undefined crimes. Yet of such it was certain Galezza spoke; he perceived the painful impression his conversation made on his innocent auditor, and as quickly understood the  
 advan-



advantage he could make of the fears he had thus the power of inspiring.

After this unpleasant conversation, he suffered Edouarda to remain a day unmolested, leaving what he had said to work its whole effect on her mind. In the evening the artful Jesuit visited her again, and very solemnly entered into a disquisition on the sin of thinking on any subject whatever, but those recommended by the spiritual directors of the parties. He desired her never again to recall to her mind any of the pernicious, the hellish doctrines she had heard from the young woman with whom she had been suffered to be so improperly familiar; bade her remember the strictness with which she had been taught to confess her very thoughts; and intimated that the only way to escape a very severe and immediate punishment, would be to confide to him in a private conversation every present emotion of her heart, previous to the general confession which she would

would be expected to make in a few days to Father Golgata. Edouarda, in whose young mind the early tyranny of bigotry had not so far crushed its native energy as to make her fears now wholly conquer her reason, collected courage enough to ask Galezza, whether it was any crime in a daughter to wish to see and be received by her father? The monk, startled at the manner of her asking this question, hesitated a moment, and then answered, "Undoubtedly it is a crime, if you would see him contrary to his inclination."—"And," rejoined Edouarda with quickness, "is a father guilty of no sin who repulses, who abandons his child!"—"That—that—" said Galezza, "that depends—on—in short, Miss Falconberg, you are now committing the grievous sin against which I have been cautioning you. You are thinking, instead of submitting and canvassing the duties of other people, when you are enjoined to practise your own."

—"Should

—"Should not duties be mutual, reverend father?" again asked Edouarda.—  
 "Yours," answered he sternly, "is implicit obedience to the will of your father."—"So it shall be," said Edouarda, "when he deigns to signify his will."—"He speaks by me," cried Galezza with increased asperity.—"How can that be, Sir," replied Edouarda, "when he does not even know I am in his house? Father Galezza," continued Edouarda, acquiring new resolution from the consciousness that she was right, "if to wish to throw myself into the protection of my only parent be a crime, I have been guilty of a very great one; for I will now confess to you, that being refused admission to him by his servants, which seems to me most unjust and unnatural, I have more than once tried to break through the barriers thus raised between us, and have attempted to find my way alone into the presence of Sir Mordaunt."

Edouarda,

Edouarda, as she hazarded this confession, kept her eyes fixed on the countenance of Galezza. She saw him turn pale, his lips quivered, and an expression of mingled fear and resentment took possession of his features. Edouarda trembled; but she had now gone too far to recede, and with a sort of desperate resolution suddenly resolved to relate the whole. In a voice tremulous from apprehension she proceeded :

“ Not believing it possible, Father, that I could greatly err in attempting what seemed to be a part of my duty, I own to you, that I went out one morning at an hour when I thought it possible I might meet my father.”

“ You went out ?” said Galezza eagerly ; “ and whither ?”

“ Beyond the park ; I know not the name of the place, but—” the recollection of the person she had seen then added

added to her confusion; "but I did not meet Sir Mordaunt."

Galezza affected to be thunderstruck with her folly and rashness. "Meet him! How could you hope to meet him there? But that was not your only attempt?"

"At another time I endeavoured to find my way through the house; but then I was equally unsuccessful."

"Some person," said Galezza, in agitation he tried to check, "some person has urged you to this wild and indiscreet undertaking. I insist upon knowing who was your adviser?"

"Indeed I had none."

"And did no person know of your having left your room with such a design?"

"The servant who waits in my room, Rachael, saw me by accident as I was returning."

"And that she has thought proper to conceal,

conceal. It is well. Now, Miss Falconberg, it must be my care, first, to inform my superior of your misconduct; and, secondly, to consult with him on the means of preventing the like for the future."

"You might easily do that, Sir, if you would give me any good reason why the daughter should be forcibly held at a distance from her father. I would submit to reason, nay, I would submit to my *parent's* commands though they should be *unreasonable*."

"Reason! You dare talk of reason! I see what must be done to stifle this dangerous, this refractory spirit. Unhappy young woman! you know not what you seek in desiring to see Sir Mor-daunt Falconberg—You would perhaps lay up for yourself miseries to come, too intolerable to be borne by a mind so little used to religious submission as yours. Would you irritate the distracted mind of a man already subject to fits of in-

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fanity? and tear open the wounds that months and years of pious consolation have never been able entirely to heal?"

"Is my father subject to fits of insanity? Good God! and his only child is kept from him!—Oh, holy man!" added Edouarda, throwing herself into a supplicating attitude, "holy man! have mercy upon him and upon me; and let me, oh! let me try if the voice of nature cannot make itself be heard—if the child, a dutiful and affectionate child he shall find me, cannot speak peace to his disturbed soul!—Was it my brother's death that has so sadly affected his mind? surely he will then find consolation in seeing he has still a daughter, who will weep with him for that sad event! Surely reason, humanity, nature——"

"I will talk to you no more!" cried the Monk, breaking from her as if unable longer to trust himself with her affecting pleading. "I go to secure your personal safety, if that of your soul is less easily

easily to be ascertained. By what means, after the orders that have been given, did you traverse this house?" He was near the door, but stopped as he asked this question.

Edouarda, who thought no other opportunity might offer for her to have all her apprehensions cleared up, then summoned courage to say, that through a door in her bed-chamber, which probably had been forgotten, she had penetrated into the chapel.

"And what did you observe there?" cried Galezza, eagerly and angrily advancing towards her.

"Nothing," replied Edouarda, "the first time, but the usual furniture and ornaments of a chapel."

"And the second?" exclaimed the Jesuit, with a countenance so pale and fierce as made her shudder.

"The second time, I saw a woman, a Nun I should have thought her, kneeling before the altar. I was frightened,



for I believed it was nobody belonging to the house."

"That form," said Galezza in a hollow voice, "was not a living woman! it was the condemned spirit of thy miserable mother!"

"Of my mother!" shrieked Edouarda.

"Of thy wretched mother! who for her sins—beware, girl, how thou followest her example—of disobedience to the Holy Church, and for her faithless conduct towards her husband, is condemned to flames and anguish—torments which are increased by consciousness; consciousness perpetually renewed; for at stated periods her now vainly repentant ghost is permitted to revisit the scene where her evil deeds were perpetrated, and to mourn and lament before the altar of that power which her perverse and contumelious spirit, when in the flesh, refused to obey."

Edouarda could hear no more; she sank

sank into the first chair near her in a state of insensibility, and Galezza disappeared. When the unhappy Edouarda awoke from her trance of terror, it was quite dark; and she recollected with such dread the last fearful words she had heard, that she dared not look round the room, but, feebly creeping to the door which led towards the servants' rooms, attempted to open it to call Rachael. It was, however, fastened without side; and finding all her efforts to pass through it ineffectual, she sat down by it, from a confused idea, that she was there nearer some human creatures than she should be in any other part; the sight of Rachael would now have been the greatest relief to her—the usual hour of bringing candles, and making up the fire, was certainly past. Yet Rachael came not; all was dismally silent, and so dark without, that she could but just distinguish the window from the wainscot of the room. Terror, as she re-

collected Galezza's words, had again nearly rendered her insensible, till at length a noise was heard without the door. Rachael appeared with a light, and Edouarda in a transport of fear and affliction threw her arms around her, and fobbed convulsively upon her bosom.

Rachael soon gave her to understand that she knew the cause of her present distress; her own eyes indeed were red and swollen. "Ah, Miss!" said the poor girl, "what have you done? What will become of us now? Father Galezza threatens——"

"Threatens!" exclaimed Edouarda: "Ah! Rachael, dear Rachael, what can he do to render me more completely miserable than I am already? Oh! Rachael, save me from this place; let me go, though I should become a wanderer in the fields, and live upon the wild fruit of the hedges; let me go—My father, he says, is mad—Oh! how dreadful!

ful!

ful!—And my mother, who I thought was a saint, an angel in heaven!—My heart sinks—I cannot bear to recollect what he said of her.”

“Why, sure,” cried Rachael trembling, “what did he say? He has been very angry indeed both with Mrs. Gournay and me for letting you, as he said, ramble about the house, and go into the chapel, and threatens to have us both penanced by Father Golgota. Ah! dear Miss! how could you do so? But, as I told the Father, it was none of my fault. Holy Mary! how should I know the doors were open? It was no business of mine to see them fast. For my own part, I would not go through them there rooms, and into the young Squire’s as was, that joins them on the left, for all the world. Come, come, Miss, don’t cry and take on so. What is, you know, none of us can help. What must be must be. Sinful mortals as we are, we must bear our sorrows as well as we can.

What if his honour, your father, is touched in the head or so, it's no fault of yours—And for the poor lady—but don't ask me, dear Miss, don't talk to me about it—pray don't—you know I am bound to give an account of all that passes to the Confessors to-morrow; and to talk more about it would only be getting into more anger both for you and me. You would not, Miss, wish to have me put under severe discipline, and suffer I don't know what, and all to do you no good."

"If it *were* to do me good," answered the weeping Edouarda, "I would not, Rachael, ask you to suffer any thing; I would not be the cause of any harm to you for the world; but *can* there be any harm in being humane and charitable, and having pity on my misery? for indeed, Rachael, I am very miserable. I shall tremble now at every noise I hear, thinking it may be my poor father raving; and then the dread of seeing my mother——"

Rachael

Rachael seemed extremely affected; yet the terror with which the priests had inspired her conquered her natural sentiments, and with a countenance in which affright was very evidently expressed she said, " Dear Miss, do, pray, for this one night, quiet your mind, and make yourself as easy as you can. May be things mayn't be so bad as you think. His honour, Sir Mordaunt, may come to; and, perhaps, after to-morrow, when Father Golgota gives orders about things before he goes away, he may give leave for you to have some more pleasant days. Come, come, dearest Miss, be comforted, pray do; I'll go and get you something warm. Lord be good unto me! Why, you are as cold as a marble stone. It's enough to make one all of a tremble to feel your hands."

Rachael then, partly as if to avoid any farther conversation, and partly to relieve the personal sufferings of Edouarda, put down the candle, and hastened

to procure her some relief, with which she promised to return in a few moments.

Rachael was faithful to her word ; she presently returned with what she deemed something good, which Edouarda was easily prevailed upon to take. The maid then busied herself in making up the fire, which was quite extinguished ; and while she was bustling about to avoid all discourse, Edouarda, in compliance with her advice, got into bed ; when Rachael, having made every thing as comfortable as she could for her, at length ventured to approach her, and said, “ Now, Miss, don’t you be afraid--if Mrs. Gournay and another person, who need not see you, come through your room to go out at that door, that there has been all this here piece of work about : for my share I can’t go, nor I won’t go, and somebody must do it ; so Mrs. Gournay, as she is the fittest person, have undertaken it.”

Edou-

Edouarda fearfully inquired if Mrs. Gournay had any intention of speaking to her or reproaching her? "Let her spare me to-night," said she: "if to have fought my father be so great a crime, and I have not already suffered enough, let me at least be permitted to remain tranquil to-night. Alas! my own thoughts are sufficiently painful to me; yet have I nothing to accuse myself of, surely, that in any other house would be called a crime. Certainly I am particularly unfortunate!"

Rachael, who dared not answer for what was intended, could do no more than accede to Edouarda's earnest entreaty that she would stay by her till this ceremony of shutting the doors had passed. In a quarter of an hour Mrs. Gournay entered, attended by some person, whom, from the heaviness of the step, Edouarda believed to be one of the priests; but dreading, as she did, their speaking to reproach her, she dared



not either enquire or look. They were gone a considerable time, and again passed through her apartment, silent and with heavy footsteps, as before: when they were departed, Edouarda, whose fears all this had rather aggravated than appeased, exerted all her efforts to persuade Rachael to remain with her the whole night, offering her a part of her bed, and even trying her fidelity with promises of emolument, and of presents of clothes; but Rachael, whether from fear or integrity, resisted these temptations, and assured the innocent unhappy tempter, that so far from being of any service to her, any disobedience on her part to the orders of Mrs. Gournay and Father Galezza would only occasion her to be dismissed from the care of those apartments, and that she could then never see or serve her at all. With this Edouarda was at length obliged to be content. Rachael, at her request, went round to every door to see they

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were

were fast, and that which led through the anti-room to the servant's side, she promised to lock without, and not to let the key go out of her possession.

Amidst the half slumbers and uneasy visions of a troubled night, Edouarda reflected from time to time on the means of releasing herself from a situation which became every hour more and more insupportable, and in which to remain seemed as useless as it was painful. "If," said she, "my father be decidedly insane, I shall never be admitted to see him, or, being admitted, shall be unknown, or be considered as a stranger or an enemy. These men who seem to have possession of his effects, and the custody of his person, have undoubtedly obtained their power by means which, helpless and ignorant as I am, I cannot counteract. I am too probably in their way; and what are they not capable of doing to remove me?" This thought led to others. "Good God! how can  
I tell

I tell but that my mother, my poor unhappy mother, fell a sacrifice to the arts of these, or men resembling these? and they would now perhaps blacken the memory of her whom they have destroyed. I have always heard that my father was very rich. These priests possess his property, and would drive away his only surviving child. I have been told, even in my convent, stories that might well authorize such a conjecture. There is surely nothing uncharitable in translating the looks of Galezza as foreboding me no good. I do not indeed quite understand what they mean, but methinks I would encounter any difficulty, any hardship, in another mode of life, rather than meet them often. Yet whether can I go? Alas! an alien from my infancy, I have not one friend in England that knows me, that can be interested about me, unless indeed it be Miss Harvey. And I know not where she is, or whither she went when she was,

was, like me, compelled to quit St. Quentin. Besides, how could I endure to become troublesome to her, who is herself a dependant, and in no comfortable circumstances? But, indeed, it is useless to consider to whom I could go, when to escape from this place, and reach any, where I could find an asylum, seems alike impossible.

On Rachael however finally rested the little hope that Edouarda entertained, either of escaping from her mournful confinement, or being enabled to endure its inconveniences till her escape could be effected. There are some persons, who, from a finer tact, a certain intuitive sensibility, can, without having had much knowledge of the world, judge of the feelings and dispositions of the persons with whom they have occasion to converse. Edouarda had a great deal of this natural judgment; and she fancied that Rachael was withheld only by her fears and prejudices from following the  
dictates

dictates of a naturally good and compassionate temper.

It happened, fortunately enough for Edouarda, that this humble friend had a heart better than her understanding. The latter, by the awe she felt for her superiors, by the prejudices of superstition and the fears of punishment, was frequently enfeebled, and became subservient to any of the persons who had acquired a temporary or rather a spiritual power over her; but her heart was tender and affectionate; she could not bear to see distress; and the pity she felt for the sorrows of others, had frequently brought on her sorrows of her own. Rachael was yet young; and among other private grievances had lately been separated from a lover, the son of one of Sir Mordaunt's tenants, who had been compelled to quit his farm, and go to service in a distant country by the severity of Camus, in regard to arrears, and, as Rachael thought, at the

the instigation of the Monks, who disliked the family because they were the only tenants on the estate who were not Catholics. Rachael dared not complain of this act of tyranny; but it made a deep impression on her mind, and embittered it against the managers of the house, whose lives were, as she now began to think, passed only in oppressing and rendering others miserable. From continually seeing instances of this, and feeling her own hopes withering in the dismal subjection to which she was condemned, she began to question the right of the Jesuits to the authority they exercised: and when power is fixed on no firmer basis than that of superstition, the moment the oppressed venture to examine it, the superstructure trembles to its base.

The tears, the terrors, the gentle complaints of Edouarda, as well as the dependance she seemed to have on Rachael as her only friend, had already produced

produced a great effect on the mind of this girl. Common reason, and that consciousness of right which dwells in the most uninformed minds, urged her continually to ask herself, whether these two men ought to keep away a child from her father, and to possess themselves of all authority and property in a house, when the right heir to it remained as in a prison? Yet the reason that produced these inquiries was not sufficiently strong to enable the mind that made them to combat the dread with which she had at an early age been inspired. Rachael was by no means in the secrets of the internal part of the house. She knew that Sir Mordaunt was at times deranged in his mind, and she firmly believed that the spirit of Lady Falconberg, notwithstanding the pious endeavours that had been used to pray it out of purgatory, was still enduring its pains; or only exchanged them for the melancholy alternative of wandering about its former

former abode, tormented and tormenting; and ideas of this terrific shade, and others with which the legends of Palsgrave Abbey teemed, had been so early (for she was the daughter of a man who lived on the domain) and so long impressed on her imagination, that she as little doubted of their reality as of the existence of the objects daily before her eyes. Still, however, she thought it very sad that her young lady, who was so innocent and good, and “to be sure had never hurt any body,” should be made so unhappy in her home where she ought to be mistress. On a disposition thus prepared, Edouarda began once more to try all the persuasive arts she was mistress of.

The so much dreaded day of confession was over, and Edouarda soon saw that what she said to Rachael had great effect. The latter became by degrees much less reserved; ventured to tell things that had been whispered in the neighbourhood of some actions of Ga-  
lezza



lezza which accorded ill with the sanctity he pretended to ; and hazarded repeating what had long been whispered in the country, that the great lady with whom Father Golgota passed a considerable part of his time did not court his company from motives altogether spiritual. These hints served only to add terror to the apprehensions that Edonarda already entertained of the two Jesuits. But when she began to discourse on the possibility of escaping from their power, she found that Rachael could not give her any assistance. Herself the daughter of a petty farmer, but little above a cottager, she had no idea of the world beyond what she had seen. Her parents had not the power, nor would they it was almost certain have the will, to conceal any one from the search that would undoubtedly be made after them. And they were so poor, that nothing could be obtained from them to carry the fugitives farther. Various conferences  
therefore

therefore with Rachael, and various schemes debated in her own mind, served only to convince Edouarda that she was effectually a prisoner, and that, how uneasy soever her residence might be, it was impossible for her to leave it.

The total confinement which she was now obliged to submit to was extremely dreadful. The hope of seeing and being received by her father had for a long time supported her; but now, without any such prospect before her, she was not only decidedly a captive, but exposed to the visits of Galezza, which she every day disliked more and more. As the authoritative tone he had taken at first had, as he plainly perceived, produced dislike rather than submission, he gradually and artfully changed it; affected first to desire only to be useful and instructive to the young lady, advise her to re-commence her Italian studies (which Edouarda, had any other person proposed it, would eagerly

eagerly have agreed to); then contrived, by bringing her Italian books and reading to her some celebrated passages, to conquer the first reluctance she had shewn, and afterwards took occasion to flatter her, distantly and delicately. Edouarda, notwithstanding that he thus actually made some progress in subduing the extreme dislike she had at first conceived, could not however prevail upon herself to have any confidence in him; there was something in his look that always made her shrink; and though she at length accepted some books and occasionally read Italian to him, she never did the latter without previously contriving to have Rachael at work in her room. She could not bear the idea of being left alone with the Jesuit; nor, much as she languished for information in regard to her father, would she lay herself under any obligations by asking of him any questions whatsoever. This coldness and even aversion on her part,

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as she took little pains to disguise it, Gallezza saw from the first; but he knew his own power too well to be easily discouraged, and the very anxiety and earnestness with which he meditated how to conquer it, aroused new ideas, and opened to him prospects which he had never till then ventured to contemplate.

Whatever were his views, he gradually receded from the austerity he had at first assumed, which he was now convinced could not intimidate, but might effectually disgust, the young recluse. His principal, father Golgota, being now gone, he pretended to be unwilling rigorously to enforce the orders left with him, and more desirous of appealing to that good sense of obedience and submission, which he affected to believe was inherent in the mind of Edouarda, than solicitous to insist on the duties which he was enjoined by his station to see her perform. Edouarda was too well pleased with the effect of this resolution of the

Father,

Father, to inquire very minutely into the cause. She knew that, whatever might be his intention, she never could be so much the dupe of his art as to confide in him, and thought that she might very fairly take advantage of his hypocrisy, to obtain for herself such alleviations of her present uncomfortable situation as it would admit of.

He had himself acknowledged that Sir Mordaunt was in an insane condition of mind ; of course he was no longer likely to be walking alone at any hour in the park, or about the grounds ; and Edouarda imagined one great objection to her being allowed air and exercise must be removed. She took occasion therefore to observe to Galezza, that her health had already suffered from long confinement, and that, as she would promise to make no attempt to see her father while he remained in his present unhappy state, she thought her confinement might be mitigated.

Galezza

Galezza affected, or possibly felt, great reluctance in yielding to her request. He made many objections ; desired time to consider of it ; stated the danger of her meeting the stranger who was supposed to lurk with no good designs about the domain, or of her being exposed to the observation of other persons. But Edouarda returned again and again to the charge ; obviated his objections, and offered to let the hours of her excursions be regulated by his directions to Rachael, who should be the constant companion of her walks. Galezza, being at length driven from all his excuses, consented ; and Edouarda, who, in consequence of this, took care to abate nothing of her reserve towards him, or to appear as if she had obtained a favour, seized the earliest opportunity of availing herself of the slight degree of liberty thus granted her.

Late as it was in the season, Edouarda found in the freedom of wandering about

the park, as much satisfaction as any thing could now bestow. It was very extensive, and in many parts overshadowed with old trees, the growth of centuries. They were now half stripped of their foliage ; and the ground, beneath oaks so immense as to be worthy to have been consecrated by the Druids of Mona, was strewn with their red leaves ; but the fir woods still afforded shelter from the winds, and dry walking beneath them ; a long plantation of pines and firs on a gentle declivity of the park, terminating among the aquatic trees that were grouped near the water, was the favourite walk of Edouarda.

She had now enjoyed her rambles about a week ; and as nothing had ever appeared to justify the precaution of her taking Rachael with her (who was often wanted by Mrs. Gournay when Edouarda wished for her attendance), she resolved to venture alone. Her enjoyments were increased, while the difficul-

ties of her going out were lessened. The gloom, not displeasing though affecting, of every object around her, impressed no fear; and if, as not unfrequently it happened, the idea of what she had seen in the chapel, which was now said to be the spirit of her mother, crossed her mind, she shuddered, yet hardly with a sensation of apprehension. Tears filled her eyes, and, still doubting whether Galezza believed himself what he had told her, she felt something like a vague yet fearful wish to be able herself to ascertain of what nature the vision was which had at first caused her so much consternation and amazement.

By degrees, the natural good sense and rectitude of her mind taught her to argue more rationally on this subject. "Is it indeed," said she, as she reflected on it, "the spirit of my mother? From her, during her life, though I was hardly three years old when she died, and do not remember her, did I ever receive any



thing but kindness and affection? From her then, what should I fear, if her disembodied spirit be permitted to return from another state of being? And if it be true, that spirits so existing are conscious of what passes here; may it not soothe that venerated and beloved spirit should her daughter be known to her? Yes, I will collect courage to address this dear shade, if a shade it be, should I ever be suffered again to behold it."

When Edouarda began the soliloquy that led to this resolution, she was in the pine coppice. It was dusk though hardly four o'clock; the air was remarkably still; and hardly a bird fluttered among the firs and underwood that crowded on each side over a very long strait walk that was once grass, and would still have been so but for the drip of the trees. She cast her eyes forwards toward the place where the evergreens mingled with the aquatic trees on the banks of the great pond, and she beheld about

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three

three hundred yards down this walk a figure moving towards her; but such was the distance and the obscurity that it was impossible to tell what it was. All the resolutions she had just formed vanished in such extreme dread, that every limb trembled, and a cold dew was on her face. To remove her eyes from the still approaching figure was however impossible, but it was too remote for her yet to distinguish what it might be. Edouarda stopped, from mere inability to go on. Her knees refused to support her. She had passed a bench about twenty yards higher than the spot she was now at; and fearing she should fall, she slowly retreated towards it, still looking behind her, and sat down. Her retiring seemed to hasten the person approaching her.

Galezza was, she knew, gone out for some days. Her fears did not therefore point towards him, when she observed the shape approaching her was in

H 3 man's

man's apparel. Her giddy admirer, the young sportsman, then occurred to her; or it was, perhaps, some other wanderer, who might give her even more cause for alarm. But there was now no longer time for conjecture. A person was already at her feet. In figure it was a youth of seventeen or eighteen. In look, in size, and even in voice—it was herself appearing to herself!

The undescribable emotions of Edouarda kept her silent and motionless; while, taking her trembling hand, this phenomenon spoke to her: “I am at length fortunate enough to see you—Edouarda, speak to your brother!”

“My brother!” cried she, hardly able to articulate. “*Have* I a brother?—Oh! no, no, they are both dead—dead, long, long ago.”

“The elder is indeed dead, Edouarda, and I have been believed so—I have been cruelly used, by the order too of my own father.—Oh! you cannot  
imagine

imagine what I have undergone, Edouarda, or by what extraordinary means I have got hither.—Do you doubt that I am your brother? Does the likeness between us say nothing in my favour?—Dearest girl,” continued he, throwing his arms round her, “do not *you* too cast me off, and forsake me.—Pity me, my sister; pity yourself, and let us unite in our endeavours to vindicate the injured memory of our mother, if indeed only the memory of her remain, and to demand of a cruel father justice for her and for ourselves.”

Edouarda was still unable to reply rationally; amazement seemed to annihilate her faculties.—The young man was by this time seated by her—his arms supported her—and by relating slightly his own history, he endeavoured to reassure and convince her that she really spoke to her brother.

“I have no recollection,” said he, “of being sent away from this place;

for I was an infant in the cradle.—You know, perhaps, *why* I was at that innocent and helpless age abandoned?”

“Oh, no,” sighed Edouarda; “indeed I never heard.”

“Nor I,” rejoined her brother, “till lately; nay, I did not even know who I was. I was brought up till I was twelve years old as the son of an Italian peasant, and then received out of charity, as it was said, at a convent of Dominicans, where I was destined to take the vows. A most extraordinary accident discovered to me, eighteen months ago, who and what I was.—I cannot now enter into particulars—Suffice it to say, that I found a protector in an Englishman, who not only took the greatest pains to ascertain my family, but furnished me with money to escape to England, and now expects with friendly zeal the success of my endeavours to make my father acknowledge me.—Edouarda, my dear sister, recollect yourself; look  
not,

not, tremble not thus.—Ah! you little know the caution I have used not to alarm you, and with what difficulty I have stifled my earnest desire to speak to you before. Answer me then, Edouarda! answer me, and tell me you are glad I have found my sister. I cannot express myself well; I have learned English only lately. The poor lay-brother, the servant of a convent, has had but a bad education, my dear sister; but he has a heart above his fortunes, and it is warm towards you.—Do not look, then, as if you were sorry that we had met—that I come to you thus, as it were from the grave!”

“ From the grave indeed!—Forgive me, my brother: my heart is ready to burst with sensations that I cannot define. So strange does all this seem, that I dare not give way to my joy, lest it should be all a dream.—But tell me, what can I do for you? What do you propose to do?”

“Galezza is now out,” answered the young man.

“Only for a few days, I believe.”

“And are you very sure that the state of Sir Mordaunt is such as has been represented?”

“Alas! I have never seen him, brother. The greatest pains have been taken to exclude me from a sight of him: and if it were once known, dear Henry, that *you* were here—I know not exactly why it should be so—but I am very sure that there is nothing those two priests would not attempt to keep you from a sight of our parent—nothing they would not do to divide us from each other, and both from Sir Mordaunt.”

“Their motives,” answered young Falconberg, “are easily understood; they are at present masters of all Sir Mordaunt’s property, and whatever interferes with their possessions must be unwelcome.—Return, beloved Edouarda, to the house: to-morrow I will  
again

again meet you here, or in any other spot that you shall name as safer; I have a friend to whose kindness I owe it that I am here—to him only I am obliged for the power of leaving Italy, and of travelling to England: without him I have done nothing: it is by his advice I have sought you in this our paternal domain; about which I have long hovered; have often seen you when you little imagined any one was near you; but never till this evening have I had an opportunity of speaking to you alone. Tell me, who is the servant that sometimes accompanies you? Is there no means of making a friend of her? Then perhaps I could obtain admittance to the house, and we could consult together in greater safety. But no time must be lost in this—If Galezza returns before our plans are digested, we may be baffled; if Golgota should come back, they most undoubtedly will.”

The trembling and still-astonished Edouarda promised to attempt, even



that night, to engage the female servant to consent to their interviews; and, as it was by this time nearly dark, Edouarda, afraid of reproof from Mrs. Gournay, became desirous of hastening to the house. Her brother took her arm within his, observing that there would be no danger of their being seen at that hour and amidst the obscurity of the walk where they were. Edouarda had not yet recovered her astonishment.—“My brother!” said she; “is it indeed true that I have a brother?—that Sir Mordaunt, who has never ceased deploring the death of one of his sons, should have another whose existence he wished to conceal?—Surely, dear Henry, there is some frightful mystery about our unhappy family, which we cannot penetrate—something that condemns *us* to suffer in silence the penalties of errors not our own.”

Falconberg replied in a low and grave tone; “There is, my sister, a cruel mystery—  
 tery—

tery—Wicked arts have, I fear, been made use of—perhaps—but let us not depress each other to-night ; you have undergone emotion enough, and believe me, dearest Edouarda, I have had my share.—To-morrow, at the same hour, or at any other that you will name, where shall I meet you ?”

“ In the same spot where we met to-night—It is never frequented, I imagine for you are the only human being I have ever seen in it.”

They were now advanced to the middle of the willow wood—A heavy mist was rising from the water, and Falconberg seemed impatient of his sister's stay lest her health should suffer ; yet it was with pain and reluctance they parted. He pressed repeatedly her hand to his lips, and besought her to take care of herself for him.—“ You, Edouarda,” said he, “you and I are alone in the world—let us love each other as if we had been brought up together.”—Edouarda

arda answered him with equal tenderness: "But whither," said she, "go you, dear Henry, to-night? And who is the friend to whom you are so much obliged? I have always understood that there were very few gentlemen's houses in this district, and that our poor father has kept them all at so great a distance, that they had long since ceased to remember that our family existed, or if they did it was only to despise and avoid us."

"All that," replied Falconberg, "is generally true; but an exception has been found in my favour in a manner which I have not now time to relate.—We have much, my Edouarda, to say to each other—Be it your care to find an easy and safe way of conversing."—Edouarda then again took leave of him, and they separated. He followed her with his eyes, for her white gown could still be distinguished through the increasing darkness, and at length the willows and fallows hid her wholly from his sight;

fight ; and Edouarda, when she was conscious he could see her no longer, stopped and listened ; she wished still to hear his footsteps, but all was profoundly silent ; and, breathless with the variety of emotions she had felt, and which had not yet subsided, she found herself in her own room, and was very glad to observe that Rachael, when she came up, did not appear much surprised at her long absence.

It was necessary to hasten the inquiry now to be made, whether the indulgence obtained from this servant would be extended to the reception of her brother—Her brother ! the certainty of her having so dear a relation, and one who appeared so amiable, seemed, while Edouarda reflected upon it, to be a dream from which she trembled to awake.—“ My brother ! my Henry ! ” she repeatedly exclaimed, “ is it possible you live, and are all that the fondest parent could wish, yet are disowned, banished—discarded by your father ?—What is this  
fearful

fearful mystery that has occasioned so unnatural a separation? What must the heart be made of, that could so abandon you? Or what must have been the arts which have thus closed that heart against you? For, whatever may now be Sir Mordaunt's state of mind, he was not always so injured in his intellects as that this can be imputed to madness." These reflections were followed by a thousand fears, lest her brother being discovered by the men whose interest it was to keep him for ever unknown, he might yet become the victim of their intrigue.—Edouarda felt also a considerable degree of dread, lest the ascendancy which the Monks had over Rachael might be resumed, and her seeing her brother rendered dangerous or perhaps impossible. The ignorant and prejudiced possess little force of character; perhaps therefore the very means she took to obtain opportunities of conversing with her brother, might be those that would betray him.

Such

Such apprehensions, though they deprived her of rest, failed of lending her resolution to speak to Rachael on the following day ; yet almost the commonest observer would have seen by her starting, unsettled manner, by her restless and wandering eye, and the little attention she gave to any thing that was said, that something pressed on her mind from which she could not at moment disengage it.

It happened that on this morning Rachael had received news of the lover, from whom she believed the unfeeling artifices of Camus and his employers had divided her ; he was, she had now reason to hope unchanged by absence, and she longed to have an opportunity of talking about him, and of the flattering hopes which his letter had renewed of future happiness. Edouarda was the only person to whom she could disburthen herself, and she began such preliminary discourse as would, she thought, lead to what she had to say ; but Edouarda, occupied with  
the

the new and interesting discovery she had herself made, attended not with her usual good-nature and unaffected affability, but walked about the room, put on her hat, took it off, observing it was too early to walk—went into the anti-room—returned—then went thither again; for that window looked over a part of the park—at length Rachael remarking something extraordinary, made an excuse for following her—when her young mistress, fixing her eyes on some distant object, uttered a faint shriek, and turned pale; still however attempting to keep the object in view which had apparently alarmed her, till Rachael eagerly inquiring what was the matter, Edouarda cried: “My brother, it is my brother!” and sunk almost lifeless on the window-seat.

Rachael, whose head was filled with the story of the ghost of Lady Falconberg, and other imaginary beings, with which superstition had peopled the house,

now

now imagined that a new recruit was added to the spectres she had been used to hear of; she had no idea of any other brother that Edouarda could have, but him whose funeral she had been witness to: her terror therefore was equal to that of Edouarda herself; and it so much affected her, that when Edouarda, who thought this a good opportunity to explain the truth, began to entreat her to listen a moment with attention, it was with great difficulty she could persuade her to be quiet and hear her, and to forbear running down to the housekeeper's room, to inform its inhabitants that the apparition of Mr. Falconberg had appeared in the park.

Edouarda, who had watched the cause of her alarm till she saw him disappear among the woods, and was sure he was no longer visible from any of the windows of the house, by this time sufficiently recovered herself to relate to Rachael all that had passed the preceding evening :



evening; and she had soon the pleasure of finding her auditor took it as she wished. To the unadulterated mind of a simple country girl, neither sophistry, however artfully put, nor prejudice, however early impressed, could reconcile the cruelty of separating the child from the parent; and to the common rank of women there is something particularly interesting in a pretty young man “who *oft* to be a rich gentleman, and ride in his own coach, and such-like, being sent away beyond sea on purpose that he *middent* have his right herritage.”—Exactly in this light the situation of Falconberg happened to strike Rachael; and neither the sublimest eloquence of all the *ci-devant* Doctors of the Sorbonne, nor even the fear of penance from the fathers Golgota and Galezza, would now have been able to shake the resolution she formed to do all in her power to assist Edouarda in skreening him from the artifices of the priests, and endeavour

deavouring to introduce him with safety to the presence of Sir Mordaunt.

Edouarda having thus succeeded beyond her hopes in engaging the secrecy and services of the only person who could assist her, endeavoured to calm her own spirits for the interview of the evening; but her having discerned a figure at a distance in the park, which she was sure was Falconberg, had so alarmed her lest any other person should also have seen him, that she found it impossible to quiet her mind, or to listen with any thing but forced and pretended attention to the history Rachael gave of her present expectations and prospects, which at another time she would have heard with benevolent pleasure.

Edouarda, when Mrs. Gournay visited her room, trembled with apprehension; she fancied her secret visible in her face, and watched every word and look of the old woman to see if she could observe nothing like symptoms of discovery,

discovery, or like fly projects to circumvent her. No unusual circumstance however appeared; yet, as the hour approached when Edouarda was to meet her brother, her agitation and anxiety became almost insupportable.—He was waiting for her; and while he eagerly expressed the pleasure he felt in again seeing her, Edouarda gently chid him for his indiscretion in appearing in the park at an hour when it was so probable that he would be seen. “My dear sister,” replied young Falconberg, “do you imagine that I can long passively submit to the degradation I have hitherto undergone? Do you suppose that I will lurk like a felon about my father’s house, and see my rights and yours usurped by such men as Golgota and Galezza? No; I have stooped to such humiliation till I could see you, till I could consult with you, and unite our interests as our affections are united; but when once I know what will most quickly enable me to throw off the yoke thus wickedly imposed,

posed,

posed, trust me, Edouarda, your brother is not of a temper to remain passive under it."

However she was pleased with his spirit, Edouarda could not hear this declaration without shuddering. All she could do was to endeavour to soothe and appease him. By means of Rachael they were now sure of being able to see each other with some degree of security; and their interview of the ensuing evening passed in explanations, and in the history of their lives, since they had, when children yet in early infancy, been banished from the paternal house.

Edouarda's story was simple, and soon told: the latter part of it, however, excited anew the indignation of her brother, when she described her situation on her first arrival. His own was more full of incident.—"I have no recollection," said he, "of ever having been in this house, or of any other state than that of the child of an Italian peasant,  
named

named Rafaele Tozetti, a sort of gardener and dependent on a convent of Dominicans, near Zaffita, a village on the banks of the Po. I was conscious of no other name or consequence than what was borne by two other boys about the same age; we ran about the fields of the Milanese, lived on little else but the wild fruits we could gather in them, added to a small portion of rye bread, or beans, with oil or a little piece of bacon. Our supposed parents made us all work equally, as soon as we became respectively big enough; and Enrico was as little exempt either from subsisting on the hard fare or sharing the labours of the cottage as his brothers Stephano or Angelo. I grew however strong and robust, and had little idea of any other felicity than a play-day at those seasons, when there being no necessity for our labour, we might wander about the country, ensnare small birds, and roast them after our own manner, between some heated stones, under

under a group of chestnut-trees, the fruit of which served us for bread ; then chase the cicala, or lucciola, till we had tired ourselves, and sleep beneath the shelter of the next tuft of shrubs till day-break. I learned however of the village schoolmaster to read and write. My first subject of concern was being suddenly removed from this simple life of comparative freedom, and taken by a Monk, called Fra Gabriello, to the convent in our neighbourhood, where I was directed to assume the functions of a sort of servant, or young lay-brother, and was gravely informed, that, if I acquitted myself well for a few years, I should be admitted a member of this religious house. I had no evil propensities, but the dread of becoming a Monk determined me at once *not* to behave well. I was lectured, threatened, beat, and sometimes half-starved—I behaved still worse ; and being by that time a stout boy of fifteen, I determined

one fine evening to bid an eternal adieu to the dread I had of what these reverend fathers intended for me; and, accompanied by my brother Stephano, who was two years older than I was, and who desired to see the world, set gaily forth by moonlight: and being used to walk much and eat little, we reached without difficulty the distant port of Genoa; and entering ourselves as ship-boys merely for our food, on board the first ship that would receive us, we soon found ourselves at Marseilles.

“ I suppose I behaved much better there than among the fathers of the order of St. Dominic; for the padron, master of the vessel, was unwilling to part with me, when Stephano, having made what he thought a better bargain for himself, entered on another ship going to the Levant.

“ Gratitude had always the power of attaching me: I felt it for my master, who voluntarily offered me the same  
wages

wages as Stephano had demanded. I was now too left alone in the world, and my padron seemed in place of the connections I had left. With him I went to Barcelona; where, and on the voyage, I learned a little English, French, and Spanish, and the patois spoken on the coast of the Mediterranean, which is neither French nor Spanish. My master, on my second voyage, had given me more decent clothes, and increased my little stipend. I was become a tolerable sailor, and prided myself on being a sort of interpreter when there happened to be any passengers in the ship who could not speak Italian. I had now been almost eighteen months absent from the convent, and was returned for the fourth time to Genoa, when, as I was walking one evening on the quay, I was very roughly accosted by Fra Gabriello, the Dominican, who had, for I know not what reason, always been particularly officious in troubling himself



about my affairs. He seized me, and delivered me to the custody of two strong men, by whom I was, without any question as to the justice of the proceeding, forced back to the convent, and confined in one of the cells—so closely confined, that my escape appeared impossible.

“ It was in vain that I remonstrated on the injustice of this proceeding—The very name of justice, or moral right, was unheard of among the Dominicans. It was in vain that I declared I had the most invincible aversion to a monastic life, and never would take the vows. The holy men thought they knew how to compel me. I called upon Rafaele Tolzetti, my father, whose property alone I considered myself to be till I was of age. Natural as well as moral law was to yield to the superior power of the church, and I was told that Tolzetti did not dare reclaim me even if he had an inclination, which I was  
affured

assured he had not. I was one day more clamorous and indignant than usual, and spoke to Fra Gabriello, who generally attended me, with more than my former asperity. I represented how very unjustly I was treated, and inquired why Stephano had never been sought after and brought back? The Monk might easily have said, Because he had never been received as a domestic of the convent; but thrown off his guard by my impetuosity, and the unanswerable arguments I drew from truth and nature, he answered, that the escape of Stephano was of no consequence, mine of the utmost importance; and this for the first time gave me a vague and half-formed idea of I knew not what. I saw, however, that the Dominican had no sooner uttered these words than he repented of them, and tried to recall them, or explain away their meaning; observations which put my mind on the stretch, and made me incessantly ponder on what he

could mean, and how it happened that I was of greater importance than my brothers, or than so many other boys whom I had known either voluntarily dismissed by their poor parents to seek their own bread, or who, weary of hunger and of restraint, had wandered away, without ever being heard of, because they never were inquired for more.

“ It was in vain, however, that I perplexed myself with conjectures; and though I still thought I saw something extraordinary in the looks and manner of the Friars I was now permitted to converse with, no clue was likely to be found while I was confined; and the restless desire I felt to find one, added another motive to my eager wishes to be once more at liberty.

“ This was not to be hoped for, while the Monks had reason to fear I should again try to make my escape. They had taught me that equivocation was in all cases justifiable—What wonder

der then if, deaf to that internal voice of integrity which still whispered in my heart, I turned against themselves the maxims they wished to teach, and deceived them who had taught me the lesson of deceit?

“ This therefore I practised, though not without many internal struggles; and so successfully practised, that, after a confinement of above two months, I was restored to as much liberty as consisted in my becoming again a servant of the convent. At first I was narrowly watched; but after a little time the fathers believed, from the unconcerned and even cheerful manner I assumed, that I was perfectly reconciled to the mode of life they had chosen for me, and again I was instructed in the sort of learning which is supposed to qualify a man for becoming the inhabitant of a cloister.

“ Tolzetti, my reputed father, had, besides my two brothers, a daughter called

Pernella, who had been married at an early age, as is the custom with Italian girls, to Bernardo Razzi, a small farmer in the neighbourhood. The young woman was uncommonly handsome; and both Tolzetti and his wife loved her with more affection than they did the rest of their children. The poor woman, my supposed mother, went early one morning to help her daughter through the day in some household business. At the door she was met by Razzi, her son-in-law, whose wild air and enflamed eyes terrified her. She inquired the cause; and Razzi, as he rushed by her, fiercely bade her seek it above stairs. Trembling and terrified she entered her daughter's room, and found her unfortunate Pernella stabbed in several places, and weltering in her blood on the bed. She was not however dead, but able to confess to her mother, that having been long importuned by Fra Giacomo, one of the Dominicans,

nicans, to grant him an assignation, she had agreed to admit him that morning when she knew her husband was to be out before day, to go to a distant town; but that he by some means or other having intelligence of this appointment, returned the instant he saw the monk admitted, who escaped from the window while Razzi had wreaked his vengeance on the miserable woman. The mother of Pernella, frantic with grief, collected about her all the people within hearing of her cries; and while one ran for a surgeon, another fetched old Tolzetti from his garden; and a third, as if glad of every occasion to complain of the Monks, flew to me, and, breathless with haste and zeal, told me that Razzi had killed my sister on finding her locked up with one of the brothers of the convent; that my mother was raving over her quite distracted, and desired I would come to them directly. Indignation against the people by whom I thought myself al-

ready so deeply injured, assisted the speed with which I ran towards the farm of Razzi. There I indeed found Pernella to all appearance dying, and her mother, adding the constitutional vivacity of her own temper to the ardent spirit of the Italian, was uttering execrations against the Dominicans, which, while the hearers acknowledged they were just, made them shudder. Suddenly she turned from her dying daughter, to whom another friar was now administering the last sacrament; and seeing me among the crowd, she seized my arm, and cried aloud, "Here! here! look here on Enrico—Enrico is another instance of the wickedness of those men!—Enrico is no son of mine—Enrico is no son of Tolzetti—No, no, he is stolen from an English signior; they say, that it was done to save him from being *Eritico*; but do not believe it, my neighbours. We should never have been paid as we have been, if that had been all. Enrico, I tell

tell you, is stolen from his parents for some bad and wicked ends; and these, these, are the holy friars; these wolves that come into houses to kill and destroy, and carry away honest men's children!' In this manner the wife of Tolzetti ran on; in despite of all that could be done to appease her. Her husband, who had been at some distance when this confusion began, by this time made his appearance. He dispersed the crowd, silenced the clamours of his wife by his authority, and, as Pernella was not dead, set about informing himself of the surgeon whether she would die. But unable to obtain any satisfaction from a man who was little better than the barber of the village, he went himself to fetch Fra Paoli, the monk, who practised surgery and medicine in the convent. While he was gone, I was left alone with Mother Theresa, who had hitherto passed for mine; and not to disturb the poor wounded creature whom she lamented.



desired her to repeat to me in a low voice what she had just said. Then for the first time she seemed conscious of her imprudence, and even half inclined to retract; but I told her I had other evidence besides hers, and that hers had been given in too public a manner, and before too many witnesses, to make her recantation possible. I felt however that it was necessary for me to escape instantly; I staid only to make memorandums with a pencil, of such names and dates as Theresa could recollect; and quitting the poor woman, wholly occupied by the hope of recovering her daughter, I hastened to leave the village of Zeffita as far behind me as possible, and never stopped, till, through bye-ways, I reached the small town of Bergamisi, eleven miles distant.

“I then debated with myself what I should do. At Genoa I thought it certain the Monks would seek for me. I bent therefore my steps to another port,  
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and, after a good deal of fatigue and fasting, reached Livorno.

“ It then became necessary for me to consider what I should do, and to whom I should apply for assistance to return to my native country. I had not till now suffered myself to doubt of the facility with which I should be restored to the rank I had been so unaccountably degraded from. But now that I saw English people daily before my eyes, and heard a language of which I only knew a few words, yet to which I was to establish my claim as being that of my ancestors, I saw all the difficulties of proving what and who I was; and was afraid of being repulsed as an impostor, perhaps sent back as such to the Fathers of St. Dominic. I was destitute of money, and among strangers; men who, collected from every quarter of the globe, were occasionally assembled at Leghorn for the purpose of traffic. It was not likely that persons so engaged

engaged would have much time or inclination to listen to a wild and improbable history, related by an Italian boy. I was conscious too, that on my first essay depended my ultimate success; and that if my story was carelessly listened to or rudely contemned, I should hardly have the courage a second time to tell it. My wants however began to be very pressing, and I was to resolve. I walked some turns backwards and forwards in the great street, examining the countenances of all who passed me. In some I thought I saw only a sordid attention to gain; in others, I fancied there were traces of some trouble or discontent, that engrossed the individual too much to allow him to attend to the calamity of another. At length I observed a young man whom I immediately knew to be an Englishman. He appeared above the common rank, and rather like one travelling to gratify his curiosity, than with views of mercantile profit. His countenance

tenance attracted my confidence, yet I knew so little English, that I feared to accost him in that language. I approached him, however, and asked in Italian, if he had time and patience to listen to an unfortunate English youth, who was, under the most extraordinary circumstances, divided from his country and his natural connections. He looked earnestly at me, seemed struck with my manner, and asked with some surprise if I spoke of myself? I answered in the affirmative. "Surely," said he, "you are an Italian?" I replied, that I had been brought to Italy in my earliest infancy, for purposes of which I had no comprehension; but that an extraordinary event had lately been the means of informing me that I was the son of an English Baronet of the name of Falconberg, and that I could produce some testimonials which might convince him of it. There is something in good and generous minds that bids them scorn the paltry fears of imposition,

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since of any such arts they feel themselves incapable. My new acquaintance took me with him to his lodgings, and heard my story. I produced the letters I had taken from Theresa Tolzetti, and he seemed convinced that I was the person to whom those letters related. It appeared however very strange that a father should thus banish his infant child, and try to forget his very existence. "But," said my new-found friend, musing, "I think I recollect having heard that there was something very singular in the character of Sir Mor-daunt Falconberg; though, not knowing him, I gave little attention to what was said about him. However," added he, "I shall be very glad to be of any use to you, both as my countryman and as one labouring under oppression. But not having been in England these two years, I cannot be so well acquainted with the manner of proceeding as a friend of mine who will  
 be

be here in a few days, in order that we may embark from hence together. And now I remember," added he, "this friend of mine can perhaps lend us some light as to the cause of your father's conduct; for, though he is not a native of England, he has lived for some years in Yorkshire, and his connections are very much in that county. In the mean time, as I fear you have been exposed to many inconveniences in your precipitate flight, consider my lodgings as your own, and me as your banker for any trifling sum you may want." I expressed my gratitude for this generosity in a way which I suppose confirmed my friend's opinion that I deserved it; and our conferences afterwards appeared to strengthen his regard for me. In about four days the friend he expected arrived. He was older by some years than Mr. Eastcourt, my first benefactor; but he did not seem less generous or humane. Mr. Warren had  
seen

seen a great deal of the world, about which he had now been wandering some years, partly for his own amusement and partly on the public affairs of America, for he was a native of that continent. His mind was the most enlightened I had ever observed. Considering himself as a citizen of the world, and all mankind as his brethren, his whole business seemed to be to counteract the ill effects of all those prejudices which teach them only to tear and destroy each other. Speaking several languages with equal facility, and having made the general forms of government as well as the passions of individuals his study, he was possessed of the means of doing a great deal of good, and no occasion to do it ever escaped him. When Eastcourt had related my story to him, and he had examined the documents which confirmed it, he hesitated not to say that I should instantly apply to some Englishman of fashion at Rome, who by application  
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to the Pope would obtain an order to compel the Dominicans to shew their authority for detaining me. "These," said Mr. Warren, "are not times when priests can with impunity violate all those lines of moral rectitude which other men agree to hold sacred. A few years ago they might have had power to force back this poor young man, and have condemned him for life to the austerities of a monastery. But, thanks to the spirit of inquiry, the parent of all that is good and laudable, the fetters so long patiently endured are every day falling off! Mankind will hourly become more enlightened, and therefore more free, and priestcraft will soon be as little an instrument of tyranny as witchcraft. Suppose," added Mr. Warren, addressing himself to Mr. Eastcourt, "that instead of going, as we intended, to wander about Calabria, which we can do at any other time, or do without, we were to go to Rome; take your young client



client with us, and endeavour to deliver him from the usurped power of these Monks, while we ascertain his right to an establishment in England? for to do one without the other will be rendering him but little service, since we know, I think, that England is not a country where a man accustomed to poverty in Italy would find his condition ameliorated; since the poor or those of humble circumstances in England find it very difficult to exist at all. Eastcourt, all benevolence, and eager to finish the good work he had begun, agreed to the proposal of his friend. I was properly equipped to accompany them, and we set out for Rome. Many advantages besides its main object attended this journey. I learned English of my generous friends, and had the good fortune to make hourly advances in their esteem. I saw all that was best worth seeing, and by degrees lost the rusticity of the Italian peasant, and acquired something of the manners  
of

of my protectors. Mr. Warren knew so well what he was about, and the advantage the actual state of European politics gave him where he was, that within a fortnight he obtained the order he solicited; and leaving Mr. Eastcourt and me at Rome, he went himself to the Dominican convent.

“ Alas! my Edouarda! it is now that I come to that part of my narrative which I hardly know how to communicate to you, since I have not yet recovered the shock it gave me. Nor indeed shall I ever learn to think of it with steadiness. Edouarda, it was my father, Sir Mordaunt, who at the period of early infancy, and even before I was a year old, had expelled me from his house and his name. He had, he said, no child but my elder brother—that brother who is since dead. Nay, he had ordered that I should be kept entirely ignorant of my family; he brought up as a peasant boy, till I was old enough

to be professed, and not satisfied with that, he had directed information to be sent to England of my death. Of all this, unnatural and strange as it appears, Mr. Warren brought me sufficient proofs. One of the brothers of the convent came by the direction of the superior to Rome. He gave me the most undoubted conviction, that nothing had been done but by the orders of Sir Mordaunt; some of which he shewed me signed by himself; and when, in a state of mind difficult to describe, I questioned the Monk as to the motive that could actuate Sir Mordaunt, ah! Edouarda! his answers were such as made me tremble, and sometimes recede from the inquiry; then impelled by the most painful solicitude to lift the veil from your fate and my own, I again urged it—again shuddered and desisted.”

Edouarda had heard him with a beating heart, and in profound silence; he now paused, for such was his emotion  
that

that he could not proceed. The confused thoughts of Edouarda pointed towards her mother; what Galezza had said returned in all its force to her recollection; she dared not however hazard so painful a question to her brother, as whether he had heard any reflections cast on the character of that mother, as a reason for the conduct of the father towards her children; yet the answers he alluded to, and which he said had sometimes made him tremble at the inquiry, and sometimes recede from it, had undoubtedly a reference to those cruel suspicions. The fear that all Galezza had said might be founded in truth was terrible; nor could the reason of Edouarda at that moment resist the fearful idea that the troubled spirit of an unhappy woman wandered round the scene where she had lived in guilt, and died in misery. It seemed like becoming herself one of her mother's accusers, should she repeat this to Henry. Shame  
and

and tenderness alike prevented her speaking of it, yet by her deep and almost convulsive sighs it was easy for him to see that she already knew what he could not without shuddering relate.

“The pretence then,” continued Henry in a low voice, “the pretence under which Sir Mordaunt Falconberg has acted in this manner, is—the misconduct, as he says, of our mother. He has imagined—I say imagined—because I dare believe it never existed but in his own diseased imagination, a legend of personal infidelity—a connection with I know not what young friend of his own, whom he met with in Italy, and received into his house. Those artful and designing Monks, one of whom, Golgota, is, I understand, still about him, were much more likely to invent this infamous calumny, than, from all I have been able to learn of my mother, she was likely to be guilty of a crime.”

“Yet,” said Edouarda in a faltering voice,

voice, "yet are they not satisfied. Their malignity pursues her hapless children; nay, it persecutes *her* even beyond the grave. The story which you, my brother, have heard, perhaps with more minute circumstances, has been related to me; and they have told me, that a mysterious figure I saw in the chapel, when I was attempting to obtain admission to my father—they have told me, Henry, it was the wandering and perturbed shade of my mother!"

A stroke of electricity could not have had a more sudden and violent effect than these words: "A mysterious figure that *you* have seen, Edouarda? Tell me, I charge you, instantly, what you saw—tell me, dearest girl, while I am yet able to hear you."

Edouarda, whose alarm and agitation were increased by the manner in which her brother spoke, endeavoured to collect courage enough to relate her motives for exploring the house at hours when

she hoped she might unperceived obtain admission to Sir Mordaunt, and what she had observed in consequence of it. When she had concluded, he asked her with great emotion, whether it was possible for him to get into the chapel by the same way she had entered it on the evening when she had seen this extraordinary appearance? This brought on a narrative of what had happened in consequence of her confessing to Galezza the attempt she had made. "Oh!" cried he, "if that be all, fear not but that I shall easily find means to force the doors, in whatever way it might be in *his* power to secure them. Edouarda," continued he in a solemn voice, "I have fearful reasons for believing that some dreadful mystery DOES hang over us. In such suspense I cannot rest. Delay, so far from relieving, will only irritate my anxiety. Edouarda, I *must* see this questionable form. You say Galezza is out; the opportunity therefore cannot be  
more

more favourable——if, indeed, I had not determined to scorn all his malice, and set myself at once above the consequences. To-night, however, you must determine to admit me; and perhaps, dear Edouarda, a few hours, or at least a few days, may restore us to our rank in society, and restore our unhappy father to himself.”

Edouarda, though naturally sanguine, dared not flatter herself that her anxiety would so soon terminate. The very eagerness and impetuosity of her brother was to her an additional reason for doubt and apprehension, if indeed the confused and uneasy ideas she entertained of her father made her dread lest Henry should incur some personal risk. Having however told him, that in consequence of her arrangement with Rachael she could safely admit him, and dreading herself the return of Galezza, nothing was to be said to put him from his design, whatever it was. Edouarda, however, before they parted,

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that



that she might prepare the way for his secret reception, besought him to tell where he had taken up his abode since his residence in the neighbourhood. "Oh! be not in any pain about me," replied her brother. "A cottage—and to a cottage you know I have from my earliest infancy been accustomed—a cottage, believe me, Edouarda, affords to him who has watched or worked throughout the day, the sweetest and most unbroken slumbers. I cannot say, however, that I have tasted much repose hitherto in mine, which is a very poor hut, constructed by its humble inhabitant, about two miles off at the foot of the wolds: I have not rested much, because ever since I have been there my mind has been constantly agitated either in devising means to see you, or by the disappointment of the plans I had formed. Often, as I have lingered about the park, I have fled eagerly to some object at a distance, my heart beating with the hope

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that

that it was my Edouarda; but I have been cruelly baffled. I approached either a peasant with hurrying and affrighted steps crossing the domain on a nearer way to the next town, or some sad and solemn-looking servant, who eyed me with an expression which immediately caused me to hasten away as fast as possible; while seeming to doubt my reality, none shewed any inclination to pursue me. Once or twice I have nearly met one or other of the Monks face to face; but surely the consciences of these fathers must be ill at ease, since they seem to me to be haunted by apprehensions which ought not to be the companions of their extraordinary piety. Not long ago I crossed *il reverendissimo padre Golgota*, in the narrow path between the willows on the pond-side; but far from attempting to detain me with his secular arm if I was an intruder, or to exorcise me if I was a mere vision of the night, he made the

best of his way from me towards the house with a degree of velocity which really surprised me. After that I became less fearful, and ventured to approach nearer to any object I saw at a distance. Indeed, my apprehensions were never very great; for I thought, had a close contest arisen, I could have made a tolerable stand against any of the persons I had ever seen."

Edouarda longed to learn some farther particulars of his journey to England, but the hour approached when he could be most safely admitted to the house. The signal was to be the great clock tolling nine, at which hour the servants assembled to their supper, all but Rachael, who had been lately requested by Edouarda to share hers. Mr. Camus and Mrs. Gournay were engaged in the housekeeper's room, for they by no means approved, at least on their own account, of any severe degree of deprivation; and the part of the  
house

house through which her visitor was to be conducted, would, Edouarda knew, be at that time free from passengers or interruption.

All succeeded to the wishes of the innocent adventurers, and Henry Falconberg once more found himself in the house of his fathers.

The idea predominant in his mind was what he had heard of his mother; and some farther yet vague information which he had formerly received, appeared to have created a degree of painful curiosity that nothing but a thorough inquiry into the subject could appease. He tried, therefore, as soon as Edouarda pointed it out to him, to force the door that led through the uninhabited rooms to the chapel; while his sister, frightened at his impetuosity, and dreading lest the noise he must unavoidably make should discover him, stood trembling near him, now anxious for his suc-

cess, and now shuddering to think of the consequences it might lead to.

The Monk who had taken the precaution to secure these doors against the tender hands of Edouarda, had not suspected that a more irresistible attack than any she could essay would be made on them. The first gave the most trouble to its eager assailant; the rest, which had been only slightly fastened, as less likely to be attempted, easily yielded, either from their broken hinges or the decay of the wood-work, to the strength young Falconberg applied; and while Rachael kept guard in Edouarda's room, and she attended him with a light, he found himself, without much force or much labour, in the matted gallery of the chapel.

Hardly allowing himself time to breathe, he hastened to that part of it where over a balustrade the whole area of the chapel was visible. He held the  
candle

candle so as to cast a light into it: but all beneath him was silent and dark. The rays fell on the altar, on which was a large ivory crucifix, and two immense wax candles in silver stands; but only these objects, and others of white marble which caught the light, were distinguishable, and no animated being seemed to lurk among the general obscurity that enveloped the rest. Edouarda would now have entreated him to retire, for that night at least, from a search which seemed to be fruitless; but his eagerness overcame even his tenderness and attention to her, and he said that he could not be satisfied unless he descended into the body of the chapel, and even sought for the entrance to the vault where the remains of his mother were said to have been deposited. "If you will stay here a moment," said he, "my dear Edouarda, I will go down below. You know not—I wish you not at this moment to know, how many reasons there are, which deter-

mine me to be convinced once for all whether the ambiguous conversation I have heard is meant to deceive me, or to point out to me my duty.”—“ Oh, no, Henry,” returned Edouarda, “ I cannot, indeed I cannot, remain here alone. My terrors, whether well or ill-founded, are still terrors; my fears, which are more insupportable because they are undefined, would, I am convinced, so far get the better of me, that I might lose all consciousness, all recollection, and you would perhaps find me senseless at your return. Henry! dear Henry! let me go with you. I will not be troublesome; for, while I am under your immediate protection, I can conquer my apprehensions. Let me go with you!”

Henry assented to this reasonable request; beseeching her, however, to compose herself, as slowly they traversed the gallery to find the stairs which led from it to the chapel below. They made almost the half circuit towards the

organ, and passed two doors that opened into the gallery, before they reached these stairs. Edouarda's heart beat quick as they softly stepped by. She listened for the sounds which from that quarter had formerly terrified her. All was now silent; but Edouarda believing Sir Mor-daunt's apartments opened somewhere into this passage, trembled and faltered as she passed.

At length, by a narrow stairs matted like the avenue that led to them, Edouarda, leaning on her brother, yet shaking like an aspen leaf, reached the ground-floor of the chapel. A few benches covered with black baize were all the furniture of its area. They approached the altar, and at Henry's desire Edouarda pointed out the place where she had seen the kneeling phantom. They gazed on it a moment in silence, and then Falconberg bade his sister lead him the way it had disappeared.



She obeyed as well as her recollection of the site of the chapel as seen from above, and the confusion of her fear, would give her leave. They approached a kind of cloister, where was a marble basin for holy water, and near it a small tablet, on which, by holding the candle up to it, these words were distinguished :

“ Pray for the repose of the soul of Dame Elizabeth Maria (born De Courcy), wife of Sir Mordaunt Falconberg, Bart. who departed this life on the 29th day of November, 1776.”

“ And that was my mother,” said Falconberg; “and I have heard that she died when I was born, or very soon afterwards. Yet, alas! how many years have passed since! And is it, can it be possible that—if—if—there were any grounds for supposing—”

“ What, my dear Henry,” inquired Edouarda in a faint whisper, “ what is it thus shakes you? You tremble—  
even

even more than I do—Hift! Did you not hear a noife? Surely there was a door opened in the gallery above?”

“ I heard nothing,” faid he, after a momentary pause. “ Perhaps it is the ivy blown by the wind againft the windows. But be it what it may, Edouarda, wherefore fhould we fear? Let the guilty tremble, we are innocent; let the oppreffor recoil, we are the oppreffed. Edouarda,” continued he, preffing the hand he held, “ have you courage to go down with me into the vaults beneath this place? I have particular reafons for wifhing to examine the coffin-plate, on which I fuppose the name of my mother is engraved.”

“ Gracious Heaven!” replied his fifter, “ you will not furely attempt it?”

“ Indeed I will,” answered he.

“ Not to-night, however, Henry; not to-night, I befeech you. I will not fhrink from any thing you expect of me  
another

another time ; but now, a terror so extreme has overcome me, that it is impossible for me, indeed, to do what you wish : you will see me drop at your feet.”

“ Dear girl !” said he tenderly : “ I will not distress you ; but I have learned to resolve and to execute ; yet I will not now press it.”

“ Oh ! do not now, another time I shall have more courage ; and if you will tell me the reasons that make you desire to examine such mournful—Ah ! softly—indeed I again heard a noise like opening a door.—Suppose my father—”

“ Father ! Mother !” said Falconberg in a dejected way, “ all are enveloped in the hideous shades of a fearful mystery, which I am resolved to penetrate, though my life be the forfeit ! But come, my poor, timid Edouarda, you shall at present suffer no more. We will return to your apartment ; and when you are more calm, I will alone explore these  
melan-

melancholy abodes of silence and death, where alone my doubts can be resolved.”

Edouarda trembled more and more as she listened ; but glad to have prevailed upon him to give up for the present his gloomy purpose, she clung to her brother, as, with a firm step, and apparently careless whether he was heard or not, he went up the stairs. When, however, they came to the turn of the matted gallery, which allowed a prospect of its whole extent to the left, and the faint light of their candle gleamed along it, they both, and at the same moment, stopped, being startled at a figure which, at the distance of fifty paces from them, leaned against the wall at the other extremity. Obscure as it was, Edouarda immediately distinguished it to be the same she had seen before the altar. Her knees failed her ; she rather hung on her brother’s arm than supported herself ; as he, divided between his tenderness

derness for her and his resolution to investigate the fearful mystery, hastened forward, supporting her with one arm, while his eyes were riveted on the shape he was approaching, which seemed unable to move from the place where it was first observed.

In a second they were both before it—Edouarda prostrate on the ground, and almost insensible, while Henry had already taken the hand of the doubtful being. It was cold, but it was a living hand; nor was it withdrawn from his eager grasp, while he repeated “Lady Falconberg!—Is it not Lady Falconberg?”

A wild, faltering, and incoherent answer, expressed with difficulty, was given however in the affirmative. “And you are my mother, my injured, persecuted, calumniated mother!” cried Henry, eagerly embracing the knees of the apparent phantom. “You are the mother of Edouarda!—Oh! look upon  
your

your children ; speak to your son, who comes demanding justice, who will rescue you from oppression, and restore you to life, and to society !”

Lady Falconberg was now become in her turn unable to speak ; and she would have fallen, had not her son supported her on one side, while he called upon Edouarda to assist him. “ What,” said he, “ shall we do ? There is no place where she can repose. Perhaps we only come to see her die ; and her son, instead of being her deliverer, may be her murderer.”

Edouarda seeing her mother continue in a state where only convulsive motions testified she yet existed, looked fearfully around her. Nor were the apprehensions she was at that moment conscious of unmingled with dread of her father, whom she figured to herself in all the terror she had heard him described in, bursting from one of the adjoining doors. She perceived however a door open not far from the place where they stood ; there  
was

was a light within the room, and suddenly she recollected that it was from thence the sighs and moanings had proceeded which terrified her so much in her first expedition. It was probably therefore her mother's room, and there she might be carried to a bed. This expectation, while she communicated it to her brother, gave courage to Edouarda; and leaving to him the care of supporting Lady Falconberg, she stepped forward, and approached the door. It opened into a cell rather than a chamber; only a sort of wooden bench and a table were in it; but an opposite door belonged to a second cell, in which there was a small bedstead with a mattress, exactly such as are used by rigid orders of nuns. Edouarda was convinced that it was her mother's apartment, and, returning, assisted her brother to bear to it the unresisting form of that unhappy woman; who, being placed on her bed, (while her son hung in extreme  
agitation

agitation over her, and her daughter, chafed her hands and her temples,) at length opened her eyes, yet seemed with extreme difficulty, while she gazed on one and on the other, to comprehend what Henry said to her; then, as as if doubting her senses, she held her hand to her eyes and her forehead, apparently trying to assemble and distinguish her ideas; again looked at her children; murmured something of Sir Mordaunt and of Golgota; trembled, and looked fearfully towards the door. Henry kneeling by her tried to reassure and quiet her. "We are at length together, my dear mother!" said he "and nothing shall again part us." Lady Falconberg gazed tenderly at him, shook her head, and sighed. "Nay," added he eagerly, "no power on earth shall force me to leave you; and if they destroy us, it shall be together."

"Father Golgota!" said Lady Falconberg



berg in a faint and internal voice. "Let us set him at defiance," cried Henry, "him and his accursed crew!" The poor woman had been too long subjected to his power, and prejudiced by his artifice, not to feel a sort of complicated sentiment of religious dread mingled with fears, for her son, her daughter, and herself. The sensations which pressed upon her heart were too much for a constitution long enfeebled by fear and confinement, and for intellects which, cramped by prejudice and depressed by superstition, had hardly dared to tell her there was any possible escape from the tyranny she had almost from her infancy been subjected to. Lady Falconberg appeared therefore bewildered and astonished, not only at the sight of her children, whom she had never expected to see again, but at the energy and animation with which her son exhorted her to put herself wholly into his protection, and throw off the cruel and  
 ignomi-

ignominious yoke, that the mental derangement of Sir Mordaunt and the usurped power of the priests had subjected her to. The influence of these men had so interwoven itself into all her ideas, that to renounce her dependance on the blessed Lady and St. Ann seemed to her not more impossible. There was not, however, much time at present to attempt relieving her by the voice of filial tenderness or direct reason, from all the chains which fettered her; for, on the chapel-clock tolling one, which echoed fullenly along the gallery, Lady Falconberg expressed the greatest uneasiness; and though she seemed unwilling, or was perhaps unable, to disclose the immediate cause of her fears, they evidently oppressed her so much, that her children thought they ought immediately to relieve her. Edouarda, therefore, having done every thing for her comfort that the nature of her situation would admit, and Henry having ex-  
horted

horted her to courage, to secrecy, and to resolution, she was persuaded to name a time for seeing them the next evening, and then they unwillingly and fearfully returned to Edouarda's room; where Rachael, half stupefied by the various apprehensions that this long stay and her own situation had occasioned, gazed at them with astonishment as great as if she had seen them rise disembodied from the tombs which she imagined (from an expression young Falconberg had let fall,) they had been visiting. Henry was now aware of the necessity of making his retreat, if he hoped to be admitted again; and though he most ardently desired to have a longer conference with Edouarda, yet he checked himself, lest he should offend his conductress Rachael, on whom alone he could rely for admittance again. After a short conversation therefore in Italian with Edouarda, in which he conjured her to have spirit and resolution, and bade her recollect the  
 additional

additional motive they had this evening discovered to exert themselves, he reluctantly took leave; Edouarda still more reluctantly seeing him depart. She knew not whither he went, nor any thing more than that he was far from a place of shelter, in a cold and windy night; while her heart and head, full of the strange and affecting circumstance that had occurred, she was afraid to think steadily of what she had seen. Henry Falconberg, who was one year younger than Edouarda, had been brought up under every possible disadvantage. Nursed in the meagre arms of poverty, as a peasant of the Milanese, his early years had been passed almost in the condition of a savage; but it is not always that such a state brutalizes the mind; and the mind of young Falconberg was an uncommon one. Amidst the mulberry avenues and chestnut-groves of his adopted country, the heart of the English boy had often been dilated by the  
magnificent

magnificent spectacle of nature. His ears were accustomed to sounds of the purest harmony; his eyes, to scenes of unrivalled beauty. At nine years old he was no contemptible improvvisatore, and could repeat with facility and grace all the most celebrated passages of Taffo and Ariosto; from whence the people of Italy, accustomed to hear them from their infancy, acquire that facility of poetical termination, which appears so wonderful to the more phlegmatic and matter-of-fact natives of the north. Young Falconberg, however, was favoured by nature with talents of greater importance. He had that innate sense of moral rectitude, possessed, perhaps exclusively, by those great minds which Heaven sometimes sends to direct and dignify the affairs of the world. Never, amidst the childish contentions which occurred between him and his reputed brothers, was Enrico known to submit to injustice from the stronger without

without manly resistance, or to compel submission from the inferior by menaces or blows. Enrico was so well known scrupulously to adhere to truth, that his supposed parents always had recourse to his testimony, as that on which they could depend. And when he was under the hard necessity of becoming a domestic in the convent of Dominicans, nothing disturbed him so much as being compelled to acquiesce in what his strong natural understanding told him, it was impossible could be true. Almost every thing he heard, and was obliged to assent to, was in direct contradiction to the evidence of his senses; and the weight of the fetters imposed upon him was doubled when he saw the inventors of those chains for others indulging in voluptuous gratifications, contrary to the vows they had taken themselves and so rigorously enforced in regard to others.

VOL. I.

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With

With an active though athletic frame, great personal courage, and that consciousness of acting right which alone gives consistency and value to character, Henry Falconberg seemed designed by Heaven for all that is good and great. In the eyes of a sister, to whom he was a first and only object of affection, he appeared something more than human. She sometimes flattered herself that he was to restore her mother to life and happiness; to relumine the obscured and almost extinguished honours of his family; perhaps heal the distracted mind of his father, and restore him to liberty and reason. Then the strange mystery that hung over the destiny of Lady Falconberg, the power possessed by the priests, and the arts she knew them to be capable of; her father's malady, and the gloomy, fierce, and irascible temper which she had heard imputed to him even before that misfortune befel him,

were

were circumstances which her imagination combined and multiplied, till they seemed to form an insuperable barrier to all her hopes, and she wished to escape with her brother to some obscure retirement, rather than brave such difficulties. But then the image of her newly found mother, abandoned again to solitude and tears, or, what was worse, to the tyranny of the Monks and the caprices of a lunatic, made her forget every thing that related to herself, and anxiously return to those sanguine hopes and expectations which the manly and affectionate character of Henry had raised.

After a sleepless and anxious night, a dark and tempestuous morning was hailed by the fatigued and harassed Edouarda with more solicitude than she had ever felt at the break of day before. Yet, as the storm increased, and the rain was driven with extreme violence against the old casements, menacing to shake them from their moss-grown  
L 2 frames,



frames, Edouarda thought of her brother waiting in his clay cottage on the wold for the approach of evening, when perhaps he might be under the necessity of facing the tempest to reach the house of his father, where, clandestinely received, peril only awaited him.

Though many hours must necessarily intervene before he was likely to approach, Edouarda could not help frequently watching at the window, as if there was an immediate opportunity of seeing him. In one of these observations, when the violence of the wind had torn away a great part of the roof from the building opposite, Edouarda, looking over the low cloister into the park, saw an horseman, in figure not unlike her brother, pass at some distance. His hat was flapped quite down, as if to keep it from being carried away by the wind, and a dark surtout was wrapped round him. He appeared uncertain where to find an entrance that led to the  
offices,

offices, and rode twice or thrice backwards and forwards between the trees; while his horse, hardly able to keep his feet against the fury of the gulf, was sometimes evidently unwilling to proceed, and at others hurried in that direction by which he could best escape the wind. At length both the horse and his rider disappeared, and left Edouarda full of conjectures, and of apprehensions which she had no means of appeasing. These uneasy sensations, pointing continually towards the safety of her brother, were extremely increased, when Rachael, who came to bring her dinner, informed her that something had happened, she knew not what, which had more than ever agitated the troubled temper of Sir Mordaunt, who, as she accidentally learned from Mrs. Gournay, had been seized in consequence with one of his most passionate fits of raving and violence.

Edouarda inquired eagerly the particulars, when Rachael said, "Oh! Miss, all as I ever learns is by odds and ends, as 'twere. Mrs. Gournay was in a sad quondary just now, as she came out from Sir Mordaunt's room, and said she was surpris'd how Father Galezza could think of staying past his time, as if nothing was the matter. Why, lauk, Mrs. Gournay, says I, what *is* the matter? So, says she, Matter enough, though I sha'n't satisfy nobody's *curiosity*, says she; but, says she, Father Galezza nor nobody else can expect of me or Mr. Camus either, to go on in this here kind of a way. Let us be paid ever so well, that is no reason why we should be ever now and then in danger of our lives."

"My poor unhappy father!" sigh'd Edouarda, "surely under such an affliction it is to your own family only that you ought to be entrusted. Is no person employed," added she, addressing herself

herself to Rachael, "is no proper man engaged to be constantly with my father?"

"There's only a stranger now," said Rachael, "when neither of our gentlemen is in the way."—"Whom do you mean," asked Edouarda, "by the gentlemen?"—"Why, the reverend fathers, Golgota and Galezza. They never used to leave Sir Mordaunt so much to himself as they have done of late. But Mrs. Gournay has sent for them; and I suppose one or t'other of them will be here to-night."—"And perhaps," said Edouarda, "exactly at a time when they may discover or intercept my brother."

Rachael, to whom her original dread of the power of the priests frequently returned, promised however more than her former caution, and young Falconberg was introduced to his watchful timid sister, without any appearance of his having hazarded, more than on the

preceding evening, the detection she dreaded.

As soon as Rachael left them, Edouarda began to relate to her brother what she had heard of Sir Mordaunt's increased irritability. "And why," said she, "dearest Henry! why would you risk what you did to-day?—Oh! you know not the terror you occasioned me." Young Falconberg desired her to explain herself. "You were for a considerable time on horseback in the park, within sight of all the west windows of the house."—"Dear Edouarda!" replied Falconberg, "you are certainly mistaken; I have not even on foot left my concealment in the cottage till the dusk of the evening."—"Then," replied she, "it must have been some traveller; a sight so unusual at any time near this house, and so particularly strange amid such a tempest as has raged to-day, that it might well excite my wonder,

wonder, though perhaps it ought not to have occasioned my fear." Falconberg answered, that it was probably some person crossing the country who had missed his way, and, having from the high grounds distinguished the house, had approached it to solicit shelter against the storm, but was afterwards deterred by the gloomy and inhospitable appearance of the building.

With this solution, which was very likely to be the true one, they dismissed the inquiry from their minds, and, with every precaution which former experience had directed, glided through the rooms to the gallery where their mother expected them.

They found Lady Falconberg much calmer than from the state they left her in the preceding evening they had dared to hope. She looked at them, however, alternately with astonishment and tenderness; and while her heart bore testimony to the reality of her children's

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presence. she appeared unable to comprehend how they had been brought thither, and to gaze upon them with as much wonder as if she knew they had arisen from the grave.

Her son perceived what passed in her thoughts; he wished to familiarise her by degrees with images which must be of too painful a nature to present suddenly to her mind. He spoke to her therefore with the most soothing affection, and endeavoured to accustom her to trace the events which had preceded her present situation; because he was sensible, that she would then be able to relate to him all those circumstances on which her fate, his own, and that of Edouarda had depended.

But it was not till after three conferences that Lady Falconberg could so far conquer the timidity with which violence and superstition had united to palsy her mind, as to be able to comply with the request of her children. She then, hav-  
ing

ing first taken many precautions, the exact meaning of which they did not understand, agreed to venture into the room now inhabited by Edouarda. The several doors, however, which led from thence to her own apartment in the gallery, she desired might remain open. Henry Falconberg and his sister, not doubting but she had very sufficient reasons for what she desired, agreed to it implicitly; and though, when she first entered the rooms where she had not been for many years, some painful recollections appeared to conquer the little fortitude she had been able to collect, yet the tender soothing voice of her restored children, their affectionate endeavours now united for her comfort, awakened in her heart that hope which long seemed to have been faded and withered for ever; and with one of these beloved objects, who gave new value to her existence, on either side of



her, she at length collected voice and spirits to enter on the following narrative :

“ Nearly as we are connected with each other, you do not perhaps, my children, even know the maiden name of your mother. I must go a little back, to give you an idea of the family to which I belonged, and the causes that combined to make me the wife of Sir Mordaunt Falconberg.

“ Their names are now perhaps obliterated from the recollection of their country, Ireland, where my ancestors, adhering to the cause of James the Second, lost all their property, except a few personals, which served to support them in France; there, like the few who yet survive, I should have been naturalized, but that a sister of my father, who was married to an Englishman of high rank, took me with her to England at four years old, and considered me as her child. But on the death of her hus-

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hand,

band, who left her a widow at eight-and-twenty, her former mode of life, and the opulence she could on a considerable jointure enjoy in Italy, combined to induce her to reside altogether in that country ; where, among other Englishmen who visited her, she became acquainted with Sir Mordaunt Falconberg.

“ What were the habits and character of his mind I had no opportunity of judging. He was so many years older than I was, that his having any intention of making me his wife never even occurred to me ; when my aunt took me from the convent where I usually resided, and informed me that I was on the following week to be married to Sir Mordaunt. She gave me no time to answer her ; but enumerating the advantages of such an alliance, and setting on the other side the destitute condition in which I should be left in case of her death, she bade me receive Sir Mordaunt with the attention and gratitude  
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his generous preference deserved. I was thunderstruck by an order so unexpected. I wept bitterly ; but I was wholly dependant on Lady M——. I had not in the world any other friend ; and I had never had a will of my own, or ventured to imagine it was possible that I could have one.

“ I was married then to Sir Mordaunt, being then hardly sixteen, and having never seen more of the world than what appeared at the conversations of Lady M——, at which I had sometimes been allowed to be present. My confessor, who had the sole guidance of my mind, was assiduous in impressing it with a sense of my own happiness, in being married to so good and so rich a man as Sir Mordaunt. I endeavoured to believe I was happy, and after the birth of your brother I really thought myself so. The gloomy temper of Sir Mordaunt seemed cheered, and the asperities of his nature softened ; by  
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the sight of his son ; and when it was necessary, on account of the large property he possessed in England, that he should return thither, I felt not the repugnance which but for that dear infant I should certainly have experienced in leaving my aunt, almost the only friend I had ever known, the few persons I had been accustomed to see, and Italy, which was to me a native country. Great pains, however, were taken to prevail upon me to stifle every symptom of discontent ; and I was soothed with representations of the power and consequence I should enjoy in England, and still oftener was bid to consider how much my alliance with a man of Sir Mordaunt Falconberg's fortune would support the religion of my ancestors, depressed and languishing as it was in that country. When, however, our suite was to be formed, Sir Mordaunt objected to much of the expence and parade proposed by my aunt ; and

our Italian attendants were limited to a confessor named Boccapatelino, and a young man whom he called his nephew, and who was, I have since been informed, descended from a Roman family that derives its origin from the most celebrated heroes of the ancient republic. He had studied the science of painting at Rome and Florence, and was no unsuccessful pupil of the first masters. His skill in music and in architecture was hardly inferior ; and to a very fine person he added manners uncommonly captivating. Yes, my children, I can do justice to the extraordinary qualifications of this young gentleman, because my heart never felt in regard to him any sentiment at which I need blush—though we have all been victims of the strange fatality, which induced Sir Mordaunt to consent that with Boccapatelino he should accompany us to England.

“ It was not surprising, that during a voyage reluctantly taken in the gloom  
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of autumn, and to a country quite new to me, I should find a resource against the variable but never cheerful or pleasant temper of Sir Mordaunt, in the society of the two Italians. Boccapatelino had gained so great an ascendancy over him, that it was rather himself than Sir Mordaunt who directed every thing: yet Sir Mordaunt often teased me with sudden fits of ill-humour, when I could not guess what had excited it. I was not unfrequently terrified by seeing him sink into such black and morbid melancholy, as must be witnessed to be described, while all the endeavours of Boccapatelino were addressed to prevent my suffering from it; and Bireno Salviati, by the most friendly attention to Sir Mordaunt, and by trying every possible means to amuse him, often saved me from scenes of causeless ill-humour, which it was indeed difficult enough for me to bear, even before we reached this melancholy mansion.

“ Here

“ Here we found a supernnuated Carthusian Monk, an Irishman by birth, who had been priest and confessor to the Falconberg family in the life-time of Sir Mordaunt’s father, and who had managed all his concerns during his long absence. Father O’Halloran was not yet old enough to be willing to relinquish power he had so long possessed. He saw the new comers with great dissatisfaction ; but Boccapatelino was so able in the art of turning every occurrence to his own advantage, and knew so well the avenues to Sir Mordaunt’s heart, that O’Halloran was compelled at first to yield to his ascendancy. But if the Italian priest himself was an object hateful to this ancient inhabitant of Palsgrave, his reputed nephew was much more so. Yet Salviati was not always a resident with us ; he frequently made excursions to London for the cultivation of the art he professed, and often was invited to the houses of noblemen who had collections

tions of pictures, or who delighted in the art he studied. Can it, my children, be a matter of wonder, that when this young man returned, his presence seemed for a while to illuminate the gloomy solitude in which I was condemned to linger out my days? He had been in that world which I was not permitted to enter; he had conversed with beings who knew how to enjoy and how to enliven existence; and he seemed to take a pleasure in beguiling those tedious hours of solitude and seclusion which neither friendship nor love on the part of Sir Mordaunt enabled me to support. I saw not, however, any thing in the manner of my husband that could make me think this a dangerous indulgence, till a little while after your birth, my dear Edouarda. I had been long ill; was weak in mind as well as body: Sir Mordaunt was almost perpetually fluctuating between starts of unaccountable passion and a fullen and gloomy



gloomy reserve, even more horrible than those paroxysms. Boccapatelino himself appeared to have less influence over him, and O'Halloran to have acquired what the other had lost.

“ One day when the return of Salviati, who had been long absent, was suddenly announced to me as I was sitting with Sir Mordaunt, there was perhaps too much pleasure mingled with my surprise ; and it is possible that Salviati, who had certainly an affection for me, though I thought it only such as he might have felt for a relation, shewed in his countenance and manner his concern at finding me so ill as I undoubtedly appeared to be. Whatever was the cause, I then first observed, and observed with inconceivable alarm, that Sir Mordaunt was jealous ; for he remarked to me, with an expression on his features I shall never forget, that all my complaints seemed to disappear before the fascinating powers of amusement possessed by Signor Salviati.

viati. I had no courage to answer, for the accusation was indeed true ; though surely it was at an immeasurable distance from guilt. From that time, however, every circumstance added to his suspicions. He appeared to feed with strange avidity on the gall he thus laid up for himself. Boccapatelino either was recalled to Italy, or pretended to be so, to have an excuse for quitting a post which probably in no way had answered his expectations. Salviati was at the same time to take of us an eternal adieu. I will not say that I did not think of the period with regret : it certainly was very painful to me : my spirits were very low : I found myself likely to become a third time a mother, by a man whose harshness of temper grew every day more intolerable ; and now I was to lose the little alleviation I yet had, in the society of two men to whom I had long been accustomed, and to one of whom I could relate my sorrows ; while the friendship  
and

and brotherly tendernefs of the other had formed my only confolation. My prefent ftate was unknown to Sir Mordaunt : I had an invincible repugnance to name it to him. The Italians departed; and Sir Mordaunt took that opportunity of going alfo as far as London, where he had fome affairs to fettle that had long demanded his prefence, but which he had delayed, as I now found, becaufe he could not determine to leave the houfe while Salviati was in it. I was configned to the care of O'Halloran, who could not conceal his joy at the difappearance of the Italians; and I perceived that he beheld with malicious pleafure my ineffectual attempts to appear unconcerned, and feemed to watch me with an attention which had in it more of malignity than kindnefs.

“ My feeble fpirits funk, between the drearinefs of my fituation and the oppreffive vigilance of this man. Yet folitude, however mournful, was infinitely prefer-

preferable to his company, which I certainly took every means in my power to avoid by complaining of illness; and indeed I was in doing so but little of an hypocrite.

“ But my endeavours to escape his observation only irritated his desire to act as a spy upon whatever I did; and my ill fate precipitated me into a ruin as little foreseen as it was deserved.

“ The evenings were long, dark, and cold. I had, however, accustomed myself to walk late when there was no rain, under pretence that I breathed better in the air. My real reason was, that Father O'Halloran, who was very old and infirm, always molested me less without than within the house. He was very much discontented at this arrangement, and, as the winter advanced, remonstrated against these evening walks in a tone which all my habitual submission did not enable me to listen to, without a retort such as the Father had never received

ceived from me. This inflamed all his angry and malignant passions; and he produced an order, which he had hitherto kept concealed, by which Sir Mordaunt authorised him to direct and restrain every person in the house, ‘ without excepting Lady Falconberg.’ Such were the commands of Sir Mordaunt, and to such I was compelled to submit.

“ But I had still a resource in a gallery where probably you have never been. It runs along the whole exterior of the house from east to west; and when the remotest end of the building, now long deserted, was inhabited, it served as a communication between the two extremities. There were in it several pictures, valuable only for their antiquity, and many of them entirely defaced. But Salviani, during his occasional residence in the house, had made sketches of some of them which illustrated particular circumstances of history; and though I had often laughed at the absurd and grotesque

grotesque figures of which he took so much pains to preserve the memory, yet which were certainly extremely unlike the Grecian models he had studied in his native country; he had always assured me that certain antiquaries in London, whose names I have forgotten, had paid him liberally for those he had already done, and wished to have all that could yet be made out, if his time had allowed, and Sir Mordaunt would have permitted it.

“ To this gallery, where I knew it was too cold for O'Halloran to accompany me in my evening walk, I now resorted: my maid, who was much attached to me, was not sorry to have the few cheerful moments she could enjoy in the servants' hall prolonged; and when I had dismissed her to her dinner, I began my melancholy evening contemplations alone.

“ At this season the day soon declined, and I frequently made several turns in

this old gloomy room, when very little light was discernible. I entered it one evening later than usual, and never had my spirits been more depressed. There was a moon, but her rays were often intercepted by the heavy clouds of a stormy sky driven over her by the wind; the weather and the place were well fitted to the desponding state of my mind. It was a night when the dead might be supposed to be abroad. I was wretched; I thought my two children would perhaps be at some time or other as miserable as I was then. Sir Mordaunt's unhappy disposition never appeared to me more entirely destructive of the happiness of all who belonged to him, and I wished that I and my two infants were all at peace in the same grave.

"Lost in such overwhelming thoughts, I had traversed nearly the length of the gallery, when something seemed to stir near me; and by the light of the moon, which at that moment streamed through  
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an opposite window, I saw the figure of a man on his knees. It seemed to be Salviati; I started and half shrieked; he advanced and took my hand, conjuring me not to be alarmed—It was Salviati himself!

“I have no clear recollection of what I said to him; I only know that he earnestly implored me to compose myself and hear him; and then entreated me to believe, that whatever might be his sentiments in regard to me, nothing in the world should have induced him to violate by thus intruding upon me the respect he owed me, but the conviction of my unhappiness, and his dread of what the persons into whose hands I had fallen might design against me. ‘I am going to Italy, dearest Lady Falconberg,’ said he; ‘I am going to bid an everlasting farewell to England. Let me have the consolation of believing I can be serviceable to you, I shall then resolutely endure whatever I may myself

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suffer;



suffer: allow me to relate to your Italian friends the harshness with which you are treated. Surely they might do something to ameliorate a destiny so cruel and so little merited.'

" I endeavoured to reply by conjuring Salviati to leave me to my fate; when O'Halloran, with lights and two or three of the servants, appeared at the door of the gallery, which was violently forced open. All was so dreadful yet so instantaneous, that I only remember the countenance of the Monk, and that Salviati caught me as I was falling. Total oblivion then enwrapt my senses. Oh! would it had lasted for ever! When I returned to the miseries of recollection, I found myself on my bed, Ellen my maid weeping by me, and exclaiming that I was dead. I raised myself, and, eagerly taking her hands, implored her to tell me what had happened. The poor girl replied, that Mr. Salviati had forced himself away from the persons  
who

who had attempted to make him a prisoner, and was gone; but that Father O'Halloran had sent off an express to London to Sir Mordaunt, and that the whole house was in great consternation. Innocent as I was, and void of all intentional offence, I felt as if I had been guilty of a crime which would involve the unfortunate Salvati in my ruin. I tried to acquire courage to speak to O'Halloran; it was possible he might hear and believe me: but he refused to attend my summons, and sent me an harsh message, that what I had denied or withheld in confession, of the consequence of which he had often warned me, it was now too late to communicate. Oh, my children! how shall I describe the misery in which I passed the time between that night of alarm and the expected arrival of Sir Mordaunt—Sir Mordaunt, whom, even in his calmest moments, I could never prevail upon myself to consider without such a de-

of fear as was quite incompatible with confidence and love! A thousand times during this dreadful interval I wished to die; my conscience accused me of no crime; and even if I had been sensible of a greater degree of regard for *Salviati* than I really felt, that would have been rather a misfortune to myself than an injury to others; since it had led to no violation of my duty towards *Sir Mordaunt*, and it was not my fault, that at an early age, and merely to gratify my family, I had been made over as the absolute property of a man whom it was impossible for me to love or esteem.

“ These reflections were far, however, from appeasing the terrors that oppressed me; and in you, my *Edouarda*, and your elder brother, in your innocent caresses and infantine vivacity, I was not permitted to seek for even a transient alleviation of my sorrows; for *Father O’Halloran* would not suffer me to see you. I wept,  
implore,

implored, and remonstrated in vain; the servants dared not disobey him, and I was a prisoner restricted from even the sight of my own children.

“Alas! the measure of my misery was yet to be filled. Never shall I forget the deadly fear which seized me, when I heard the sound of those wheels enter the court-yard, which I knew brought my uninjured but inexorable husband! My poor maid, unable to speak comfort, stood trembling by me, wiping the cold dew from my face, and applying salts, which were insufficient to keep me from fainting; after a dreadful hour of suspense, I heard Sir Mordaunt’s voice, Sir Mordaunt’s step on the stairs. The door opened, and I sunk wholly insensible into the arms of my woman; but the appearance of death itself did not soften my inhuman persecutors, and I was carried in that state into a kind of cemetery beyond the chapel, not indeed under ground, but a damp sepulchral vaulted

vaulted room; and Sir Mordaunt declared to my weeping servant, that there I should finish my guilty and miserable life. I opened my eyes as he pronounced in a voice of thunder this barbarous sentence; but the horrible countenance I saw made me again close them—oh! how ardently did I hope for ever! But that would have been too mild a fate for me.

“ I again revived, awakened from this trance by the shrieks of my maid, whom they endeavoured to force away; and recovering suddenly some degree of courage, I besought Sir Mordaunt to consider what he was about; protested my innocence; menaced him with the resentment of my friends; and, to excite his compassion, declared that I was three months advanced in my third pregnancy. Ah! how sadly I mistook the man on whose mercy I depended, whose pity I tried to excite! He knew I had no friends, who, if they could, would protect me from his violence; he affected

to consider my condition as a new and undoubted proof of my guilt ; and with a malignant grin, at the recollection of which my blood even now runs cold, dashed me from him, uttering at the same time a sentence too gross to be repeated, and, furiously seizing my faithful Ellen by the arm, dragged her half insensible away, while the door was closed by the united force of Sir Mordaunt and the people who attended him, regardless of the risk they ran of crushing my hands as I endeavoured still to cling to Ellen, the only person who seemed to pity me ; and at length quite exhausted, I sunk back on the damp floor of my dungeon. The iron-nailed door was closed upon me, as I thought for ever, and terror once more gave me a transient respite from the sense of misery.

“ But even with the relief of forgetfulness I was not long indulged. Again my eyes opened ; again my senses were alive to the wretched consciousness of

existence. I looked wildly around me. A lamp was burning on a stone-table, above which hung a crucifix; and near the lamp was an human skull, which I fancied had recently been reduced to fleshless state. A pitcher of water, a piece of bread, a mattress on the floor with two or three blankets spread upon it, comprised all the rest of the furniture of this hideous abode, where I now believed it certain that I should end my unfortunate life; and I know not whether in that dreadful moment the idea of being released for ever from the sight of Sir Mordaunt, did not appear to make me amends for a lingering and solitary death, brought on by the acute sufferings of famine. Such was my abhorrence of his injustice and cruelty, that I am sure I should at that instant have met death with joy, if life, exposed even to the disgust of seeing him, had been the only alternative.

“ But my punishment for an imputed  
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crime

crime was not so soon to end; yet assuredly it was innocence alone that prevented my sinking under such a weight of misery. I had not deserved the cruelty thus inflicted upon me: I dared appeal to that Heaven, whose sun, whose stars I thought I should never more behold, to witness, that though I never had loved Sir Mordaunt I had never wronged him. My life, ever since I had become his property, had not been happy enough to make me desirous that it should be prolonged; yet towards you, my children, though my cruel persecutor was your father, my heart melted with tenderness; and I even felt affection for the unfortunate infant which was, I believed, doomed to perish unborn with its desolate and most unhappy mother!

“ Such reflections brought tears to my relief; and excessive fatigue and agitation, together perhaps with my per-



sonal situation, counteracted all the terrors which surrounded me; I slept wrapped in the blankets that had been left for me—and slept, as I believe, even till morning. But no ray of light entered my dungeon; no cheerful sounds announcing the return of day were heard within it: the lamp seemed to be nearly expiring; its wavering rays now flashed faintly on the dreary walls, on the table and its melancholy furniture; and now seemed sinking quite away, and likely to leave me in utter darkness. Then my feeble heart sunk cold and hopeless within me. The fear of the dreadful death to which I was condemned hung heavily upon me; and suddenly occurred to me a story I had been reading in an old French book\*, which with some others yet lay about what had once been a library in the house, and I fancied the skull I saw

\* Queen of Navarre's Tales.

was that of the unfortunate Salviati, and that he had fallen a victim to the jealous fury of Sir Mordaunt.

“ I became sick as I recalled all the circumstances of the story to which I now believed my own was to be a counterpart ; and sinking on my bed I covered my eyes, and thought I could resolve never to open them more.

“ Oh ! how did memory, ingenious in tormenting me, now carry me back to those happy days that I had passed in Italy ! Pardon me, natives of England, justly celebrated for many virtues—pardon me, if I now thought with abhorrence of your island and its inhabitants, and cursed in bitterness of heart the hour when, leaving my Italian home, I was sold to one of your rich proprietors. But my regrets, my execrations, my protestations of innocence, were all in vain. Hours passed away ; my lamp was totally extinguished ; I could no longer discern either the fearful object that had re-  
newed

newed my terrors, or the provision that had been left me, which however I had no inclination to touch. I imagined it must be nearly night again, and that it was certain I was left to linger out my miserable life in this cavern without farther notice or pity.

“At length, after many many long hours of dreadful suspense, I thought I heard a noise without the door; yet dread of perceiving the countenance of Sir Mordaunt, distorted as it had been the preceding day with malignant revenge, gave me infinitely more apprehension than the expectation of relief afforded me satisfaction. As the eye, however is always instinctively turned towards what it fears, I gazed eagerly on the door, which I heard slowly unbarred and unlocked on the other side. I dared not breathe; I dared not steadily look on the person that entered. My fear of Sir Mordaunt, such as I had seen him the preceding night, was greater than my dread of death; but it was not Sir

Mor-

Mordaunt who entered, it was Father O'Halloran, and behind him appeared a woman. I hoped it might have been my faithful Ellen; but it was a stranger, of an harsh, meagre and unpleasant countenance, whom I had never seen before.

The Father began to exhort me to confession and repentance. I summoned my courage, (alas! it was but little I could at any time muster,) and exhorted *him* to humanity and charity. Confession, save such as he had been in constant habits of hearing from me, I had none to make; and while he spoke to me of Salviati, I assured him with the most solemn asseverations that I knew not why he had returned to Palsgrave, and that never had he violated the respect he owed me as the wife of Sir Mordaunt Falconberg. My protestations were useless. The priest assured me, in a voice which sounded as if destined to decree my death, that Sir Mordaunt would execute against us both the most exemplary vengeance,

geance, if I persisted in refusing to avow the truth, and to own that the child I had acknowledged I went with, as well as my infant daughter, were the offspring of Salviati. The wickedness of this new charge almost overcame me. I repelled it, however, with the courage that Truth alone could have lent me. I declared to Father O'Halloran, that I was ready to die; but I would neither be terrified into accusing unjustly an innocent person, or illegitimizing, while I so shamefully belied my own honour, the children Sir Mordaunt was bound to protect. 'One,' said I, weeping bitterly, (for tears now came to my relief,) 'one will probably never see the light, it will perish with its unhappy mother! But what has my little Edouarda done? what crime has that sweet innocent creature committed, that her father would throw her from his bosom to poverty, contempt, and infamy?'——To talk to prejudice, to remonstrate with malignant prepos-

prepossession, is very bootless. Father O'Halloran, far from believing me, affected to consider the denial of my guilt as a considerable aggravation of it. He left the room more irritated against me than when he had entered it, and I found myself alone with the woman.

"She now tried other means: informed me, amidst many hypocritical expressions, that nothing was so likely to appease Sir Mordaunt as an avowal of my guilt; and that he was as much shocked at my wicked omission at the confessional, as at the injury done to himself. She conjured me therefore to declare and repent my transgressions, as the only probable means of escaping the misery I should otherwise be condemned to. I answered, that where there was no crime, the acknowledging one would be itself the greatest breach of morality and religion, and that I was prepared to meet every thing Sir Mordaunt might inflict, rather than criminate myself. I asked who she  
was,

was, and to what was owing her interference : but she declined answering my inquiries; and having produced a few necessaries, and taken from without the door, where it had been left by some other person, food enough for the day, she left me; strengthened in my resolution to die where I was, rather than utter a falsehood derogatory to my own honour and to truth. The same scene passed every day for about a month between me and this woman, who was, I found, a relation of O'Halloran's. The Father himself was sometimes pleased to visit me; but he refused to hear my confession, under pretence that I sinned by reservation every time I made it. I know not what was this man's motive for his cruel persecution, since he had gained his point of expelling the Italian inmates of the house, and was now in possession of Sir Mordaunt's confidence, as well as of the direction of his conscience. How long I had remained in the dungeon to  
which

which I was thus confined, I know not exactly, for I had no means of computing time ; but I have since found it was near three months, when to my surprise, my own maid entered the place one day instead of Mrs. O'Crai, and told me that Father O'Halloran was suddenly dead, and she was sure I might be released from my cruel and unjust imprisonment, if I could see Sir Mor-daunt before he fell again under the dominion of some person whose interest it was to keep him at enmity with me, and in subjection to himself. I inquired after Mrs. O'Crai, and heard that she was busied in securing what it was believed O'Halloran had amassed, and seemed solicitous about nothing so much as being allowed to withdraw without inquiry or molestation. My faithful Ellen added, that she had long since been dismissed the house ; but that a servant in my interest no sooner knew of the sudden death of O'Halloran, than he took  
the



the key of my prison-house, which he knew, because he had been often employed in carrying food to the door, and had hurried to Ellen with the means of my deliverance.

“ Though my dread of Sir Mordaunt was such, that, had I had time to consider, I might have shrunk from the attempt, yet now the natural love of life and of liberty conquered my terrors; and unprepared as I was, and trembling with emotions that I yet shudder to recollect, I attempted to hasten to the apartment of Sir Mordaunt. But I was extremely weak; and when I reached the door of the room where I believed him to be, I was unable to open it. Ellen, as timid as I was on most occasions, now exerted some degree of courage; she threw the door open before me; I saw Sir Mordaunt; he seemed to look more stern, more ferocious than ever; but a sudden consciousness of innocence, and even of being myself the injured person, prevented

vented me from obeying the first impulse of fear, and abjectly throwing myself at his feet as a criminal imploring pardon. Yet the sense of my wrongs did not give me courage to speak; I stood a moment breathless and almost insensible. Then feeling my head grow giddy, and that I was likely to fall, I staggered by the help of Ellen to a seat. Sir Mordaunt, who seemed unable to express by words any part of the various emotions which agitated his stormy bosom, approached me in a menacing attitude, and I sunk senseless before him.

“On recovering my recollection, I found myself on a better bed than I had been accustomed to in my prison, and nobody near me but my poor Ellen. She endeavoured to appease my agitated spirits by assuring me, that, from all she could observe in the late interview, Sir Mordaunt was disposed to forgive me. I dreaded however his forgiveness hardly less than his resentment; for so  
deep

deep was the impresson his injustice and cruelty had made, and so great was my abhorrence of his person, which I had never loved, that when, from far other motives than those of real affection, he once more approached me, mingling resentment and doubt even with his caresses, I would gladly have returned to my dungeon, or even have sought shelter in the grave, rather than have become, as I was however gradually compelled to do, the mere victim of his animal gratifications. O'Halloran was no longer at hand to inflame his jealousy, but it had taken too deep a root ever to be eradicated: yet his passions were accustomed to be uncontrouled, and his superstition prevented him from seeking any other object. He had soon another confessor; and probably it was contrived by him (Father Golgota), that to reconcile Sir Mordaunt's revenge or honour with his desire to keep me in his power, it should be given out  
that

that I was dead; and that my child, as soon as it was born, should be removed, and afterwards conveyed to Italy, and so brought up, that, if a boy, it might never interfere with the fortune of its elder brother; if a girl, pass with my Edouarda its innocent life in a cloister.

“It was not difficult for all this to be contrived. Sir Mordaunt had long driven from him all his neighbours, and the very peasants of the country avoided the house as the scene of black orgies and of horrid rites. Ellen was again dismissed, and I never knew what became of her. When the hour of childbirth drew nigh, a woman attended me, who would answer no inquiries. I brought you, my dear Henry, into the world; but hardly was I allowed to weep over you before you were taken from me, and I found that great mystery was observed in every thing that related to me. I was removed, after a little time, into the chamber where you found me;  
from

from whence I was never suffered to depart but at stated hours to the chapel, where I soon learned that prayers were actually put up for the repose of my soul.

“ I had no relation, no friend, in England; hardly any connection in the world to whom I could appeal; and gradually my spirits sunk into total despondence, and I became almost torpid—submitting to the direction of the priests, and to the ill-humour or more hateful propensities of Sir Mordaunt, as an helpless being who had no will or power of her own. My mind lost its activity; my frame became enfeebled; I saw no escape but in death; and, in hopes of death, dragged on some years of miserable life, till the return of my eldest son from Italy gave me once more an object which re-animated my wretched existence. This dear son, however, I was never permitted to speak to; never permitted to see but at a distance. He  
knew

knew not that his mother lived; and I was assured that if I made any attempt to inform him of it, I should be placed far out of the reach of ever hearing of him again. I saw him therefore joining in prayer for the mother, who, living and wretched, heard his voice, yet dared not approach and bless him. This was long one of my heaviest punishments; but Edward, my poor Edward, of too delicate a structure to bear his father's gloomy and capricious humours, drooped in this inauspicious atmosphere, and was sent back to Italy, from whence he returned in his coffin. I saw him: yes, my children, I saw him carried to the vault where I was myself supposed to sleep. I heard the *De profundis* sung over him; yet I dared not express the agonies of my heart; and Sir Mordaunt, grown more fierce, more cruel, from that moment seemed to have a horrid joy in witnessing my distraction, when he told me, that the spurious offspring I

had imposed upon him being before dead, I was no longer mother of a son; and that my daughter I should never more behold.

“ It was in vain that I would have reasoned myself out of the attachment that thus vainly agonized my heart, by asking how the children of such a man could be dear to me? I felt that they were still my children; and on the eldest, as I could not love his father, all the early tenderness of a heart overflowing with affection had settled, from the very moment of his birth; and before he was taken from me, you, my lovely Edouarda, shared without lessening my maternal tenderness. On my poor Henry, victim before his birth of suspicion and injustice, my memory dwelt with all the anguish of hopeless fondness. His first cries were ever in my ears; the idea of his being thrown in early infancy on the mercenary care of strangers, and left to perish, a poor outcast orphan, was for

ever present to me; and without any object to call off my mind from these sad contemplations, I sunk into a kind of torpid despair, from whence I was never roused but by the violent paroxysms of rage to which Sir Mordaunt daily became more subject, and which not unfrequently endangered my life. Often have I exposed myself to his fury, in the hope that some fortunate blow would end my existence and misery together. But the Confessor, who was now with him, and a co-adjutor whom he procured from Rome, gradually obtained an ascendancy over him by means of the religion to which he had always been so devoted. Insensibly, and from his own increasing incapacity to manage the affairs of his estates, all fell into the hands of these men. The steward, tenants, and servants were all chosen and regulated by them. Golgota, who had at first proposed the expedient of my being supposed dead, in order to save



the honour, as they said, of Sir Mordaunt, had every day new reasons to wish this deception might never be discovered; and he took his measures so well, and was by the ascendancy he had over all the servants so enabled to support any fraud he chose to invent, that, even if there had been any one to question the fact of my death, he would have found means to baffle their inquiries. But no such person existed; there was not in the world a being who belonged to or was interested for me. My aunt was long since dead, and my few relations who had never known me, had no motive to give themselves any trouble on my account. The terrific gloom which had always lowered over the house of Palsgrave, the mysterious air which other forms than those of the established religion gives to a family, and the superstition of the ignorant country people, all served to assist in concealing the secret of my being still living.

living. Such of the poor servants as were not entrusted with the truth, have often seen my ghost; and they have been told, when this has been revealed in confession, that I was suffering for my breach of conjugal faith, and only occasionally released from the purgatory to which I was condemned, to visit, as another species of punishment, the scene of my guilt.

“Constant vigilance on the part of those who guarded me, with a total want of motive for enterprise on mine, gradually diminished every thought of escape, or of changing the sad colour of my destiny. Want of exercise, of air, of society, of every hope in this life, combined to occasion a sort of palsy of the mind, as well as a total deprivation of bodily strength. I sometimes have been for days together hardly conscious of my existence, and sometimes have fancied myself really dead, and have been sorry, when the person entrusted to supply me

with food, or the priests in summoning me to the chapel and the confessional, have awakened me to something like a consciousness that I still was a living being, and still living only to be wretched.

“ Since you, my children, have been so wonderfully restored to me, new hopes have sprung up in my heart. I now feel that Heaven has not abandoned me; that I have even in my living grave been an object of its mercy: yet with how much of apprehension are my fond hopes embittered! These men are one or other of them always on the watch; I fear the entire possession and management of so large an income as Sir Mordaunt leaves in their hands, is a temptation which their integrity cannot withstand. The man to whose more immediate care Sir Mordaunt is in his most ungovernable moments consigned is their creature; and though he often neglects his duty, they are unwilling to replace him

him by another on whom they might not so certainly rely. Ah! you know not, nor can I explain to you, all I suffer. "But I am exhausted; my narrative, though told by snatches, has perhaps been tedious to you. Now, however, that you are in possession of its melancholy circumstances, consider, my dear loves, what can be done to restore you to your rights; and, to your unhappy father, children of whom any man may be proud. For me, I shall be content to linger out in obscurity the little of life that remains; too happy if, before I really close my eyes for ever, they behold you re-instated in your father's affection, and acknowledged as the heirs of his fortune."

Lady Falconberg ceased speaking; and her son, who had with the utmost difficulty refrained from expressing the various emotions with which his bosom was agitated while he listened, saw that she was too much affected, and that it

was time to lead her back to her solitary chamber, from which she had been absent longer than she seemed to think was safe. She embraced him and Edouarda with more than usual tenderness; and her son conducted her in safety to her own room, and returned unobserved to that where Edouarda, who had checked herself before her mother, waited, and drowned in tears threw herself into his arms.

But little time, however, was allowed them to express to each other the sensations which their mother's narrative had given them—for Rachael's signal was heard at the door; and on being admitted, she told them, in great apparent alarm, that Sir Mordaunt had been again disturbed by something that she did not clearly comprehend; that Father Galezza was come back, and seemed very uneasy and out of humour; and that the servants imagined by what had passed, that Golgota, whose appearance  
they

they particularly dreaded, had been sent for. Rachael added, that it was supposed the disturbance in the interior part of the house had arisen, though she knew not how, from the appearance of a stranger who had been seen about the house and park, and that she trembled to think it might be Mr. Falconberg himself.

No time was allowed them to deliberate. Rachael entreated Mr. Falconberg to hasten away, promising however to attend to the usual signal for Henry's admittance the next evening, if no circumstances arose to make it dangerous. On that evening they hoped to meet Lady Falconberg again, and consult with her on the means of delivering themselves, as well the mother as the children, from the strange and comfortless situation they were now in.

As nothing intervened that renewed the alarm, Henry Falconberg, impatient

to communicate to his mother and sister the result of his reflections, was exact to his appointment; was admitted as usual; and as usual hastened to the apartment of Lady Falconberg, whom he tenderly supported and encouraged, while she tremblingly clung to his arm, and in a faint whisper told him "she knew not why, but a strange heaviness hung upon her." Fear more distressing than usual pressed upon her heart and agitated her nerves, and it was with difficulty, even with his assistance, that she was able to traverse the rooms between her own and that where they usually met. There Edouarda waited at the door, and the moment her mother saw her she threw her arms around her, and fell into a passion of tears. The spirits of Lady Falconberg appeared then to be relieved; and her son holding hers and his sister's hands, which he tenderly pressed to his heart, endeavoured at once

to appease their apprehensions for the present, and to represent the possibility of their enjoying happier days for the future ; when suddenly this affectionate conference was interrupted by a violent noise, as of a man in the most furious transports of rage. Hardly had they time to express to each other the terrors they felt, before Sir Mordaunt burst into the room. His distorted countenance was pale with rage, his haggard eyes flashed fire ; in his hand he brandished some offensive weapon, and in a terrific voice he exclaimed, " Where is the villain ? he who dares break into my house ? who insolently forces himself into my notice, and intends to rob me, under colour of pretending to a child I disclaim ? " His furious looks then fixed on young Falconberg, who had thrown himself before his mother and sister. He advanced towards him, and with the iron instrument he held struck him so sudden and violent a blow on the temple, that



Henry Falconberg fell senseless, and to all appearance dead, at his feet.

Lady Falconberg now forgot every thing but the anguish inflicted by this sight, and her indignation against the cruel monster who had occasioned it. She threw herself on the ground by her murdered son, loudly declaring who he was; reproaching Heaven, and execrating his murderer. The wretched maniac, whose diabolic passions were now roused to the wildest degree of phrensy, would very probably have repeated the blow on her or his defenceless daughter, who, endeavouring to excite his compassion by prostrating herself before him, lay more than half dead on the floor,

lifting her imploring hands, unable to speak; but his keeper, through whose negligence he had escaped, now hurried into the apartment, and by force withheld him. His efforts, however, to commit farther violence on his miserable family were so great, that a blood-vessel  
burst

burst in his lungs; and, as he was torn from the scene of murder by the attendants, his raving was half stifled by the blood which streamed on the floor.

Galezza, pale and affrighted, now appeared. He had the air of a man conscious that the sight of woe he beheld was owing in some degree to himself; yet he had no presence of mind to attempt any thing for the relief of the sufferers. Lady Falconberg hung over the bleeding body of her son. She now shrieked out that he lived; now in a hollow and tremulous voice deplored his death, just as he was restored to her—at the very moment when she had found something that might sweeten to her an existence rendered for many years so wretched. Edouarda, with glazed eyes and trembling lips, livid and refusing to articulate, stood near them both; she would have spoken of hope, of comfort, she would have tried to propose some remedy, but no hope was in her heart;  
not

not even when she saw Henry's eyes slowly open, and look on her and her mother as if life and recollection were returning. The struggle was short; he gazed for a moment on both of them; an expression of satisfaction was visible even amid the agonies of death on his countenance. He made a slight motion with his hand, as if to recommend his mother to Edouarda, and died.

Excess of horror, when she recollected that her father was the murderer of her brother, now mingled itself with her grief, with fears for her mother, and every terrific apprehension that could at once overwhelm her. Yet did Edouarda still retain some presence of mind; and approaching Galezza, who with hasty strides continued to traverse the room, she would have besought his assistance to carry Lady Falconberg to her own room: but the fierceness of his look, as he shook from his arm her supplicating hand, added to her acute distress,

trials, and she fled from him to see what servants could be persuaded to assist her. Not one was left but Rachael, who was now supporting the head of the miserable mother, who seemed to have lost the sense of her calamity, and was become as cold as the corse on which she rested. Rachael, though more dead than alive, understood what Edouarda wished, and they together tried to raise Lady Falconberg; but their strength was wholly unequal to supporting her, and in the attempt they sunk together to the ground, where in a few moments they were aroused by the terrific voice of Gollum.

This man, ever the dread of the whole household, now addressed himself to Edouarda; and without feeling or pity for the deplorable condition in which he saw her, he began to reproach her for the disaster which had happened. "You, Miss Falconberg," said he, "you, not content with forcing your-  
self

self into a house where your presence was every way improper, have introduced strangers, who have irritated your father's insanity into fury. Some little inadvertence on the part of the persons who have the care of him, and my unfortunate absence, have given these people opportunities of molesting him; and you see the fatal consequence. Here is murder! murder for which you must be answerable if inquiry should be made into it, for to your indiscretion, Madam, it has been solely owing."

"He was my brother!" sighed Edouarda.—"And the other man, he who has thrice contrived to intrude himself into Sir Mordaunt's presence, was he, Madam, also your brother?" Edouarda knew not what he meant; a deep groan burst from her oppressed heart, but she had no power to answer. Her mother's continued insensibility called upon her for all the exertion she was able to make:

make: she chafed her temples and her hands; tried now to awaken her to life and consciousness; and now, envying a stupor so much preferable to the anguish she herself felt, desisted; then, after a moment's recollection, again implored Rachael to try to remove her mother from a place where, when she again opened her eyes, the first object that met them would be the pale and mangled countenance of her murdered son!

Golgota, as if suddenly struck with some new apprehension affecting his own safety, hurried out of the room; Galezza and the servants, who had eagerly crowded in, had all left it before. Edouarda collected resolution enough to beseech Rachael to go and try if nobody could be prevailed upon to come to lead Lady Falconberg to her room. Rachael, however unwilling to leave her, yet consented at her earnest entreaty, and Edouarda was left alone  
with

with her dead brother and her dying mother.

It was almost dark: the little light afforded by the windows fell on the ghastly faces of the only two beings she had ever been permitted to love. One, if she yet lived, would return to a sense of her existence only to execrate the hour of her birth: the other, so lately blooming in hope, and youth, and health, and courage, was gone for ever, and deprived of his being by the author of it.

“ Oh, God!” cried Edouarda, as her stunned faculties slowly returned, “ Oh God, thy ways are inscrutable; thy afflicted creatures suffer, but are forbidden to complain. Was ever misery equal to mine? Yet how have I deserved to be so very a wretch? Yet, what have I done, what has my poor persecuted mother done, that we are thus overwhelmed? And thou, my brother! my Henry!—” Grief then choked her utterance; yet  
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it was not the grief that produces tears: her eyes were dry and fixed, her mouth parched, and her respiration difficult. She felt as if she were herself dying, and most ardently desired it might be so if her life was not necessary to her mother.

A long, a dreary interval, involved in total darkness, the unhappy Edouarda sat supporting her mother's head on her shoulder, with one arm round her waist, while with the other she now and then tried to discover if any pulse intimated returning life. Once her hand touched the already clay-cold cheek of her brother, and starting and shuddering she hastily withdrew it.

Increasing darkness and silence aggravated all the horrors of her situation. Lady Falconberg breathed not; no pulsation of the heart could be felt, and Edouarda concluded that she too was dead. At length a confused murmur was heard below; then a number of men spoke



spoke together, as contending eagerly and angrily, and Edouarda even imagined she distinguished the voice of her father. The sounds approached, they were at the door, and a number of persons with lights were in the room. It was a scene of new distress to the unhappy Edouarda, who, from her ignorance of the painful consequences of a circumstance in itself so dreadful, could not comprehend what was the business of the Coroner and his attendants, who now entered. More than half insensible, she was utterly incapable of answering the questions which the man who had authority to make them, a rude and unfeeling attorney, residing in a town about four miles distant, thought himself authorised to put to her. His examination of her bleeding brother, and his inquiry as to her mother, who, without apparent life, was again supported by Rachael, contributed to overwhelm the unfortunate sufferer with confusion and  
anguish ;

anguish; and the scene would have ended in a total deprivation of the little consciousness that remained to her, had not another party, and of another description, entered the room, before whom the myrmidons of the law gave way in respectful deference.

A gentleman about fifty, of very respectable appearance, approached the miserable group: he took the half lifeless hand of Edouarda; he spoke to her in accents of kindness, such as she had not lately heard. She looked up; his face expressed benignity and compassion, and an half conscious pressure, which her trembling hand made on that of the stranger as he would have raised her up, seemed to express her hope that she had found a friend. He gave orders for the removal of Lady Falconberg to her own room; and gently intimated to her wretched daughter, that it would be better for her also to go, as well as to assist in whatever it might be necessary to do for Lady Falconberg, as to escape the  
unplea-

unpleasant conversation that must unavoidably pass in regard to the dreadful catastrophe which had just happened. Edouarda was incapable of remark or resistance; she was raised from the ground, and by signs, for she was unable to speak, seemed to implore the attention of the assistants towards her mother; and casting on the body of poor Henry an agonizing look, she was turning to follow those who were supporting Lady Falconberg, when she was roused from the torpor of grief by a new object. A young man, pale, dishevelled, and held with difficulty by some people about him, appeared at the door of the room. "I *will* see her," cried he, struggling to escape from those who confined him; "I will implore her pardon, I will die before her; but I cannot die till I have obtained her forgiveness." The elder gentleman appeared shocked, and hastily approached the young man. "I insist," said he, "on your being calm. Would you add to the distress of such a scene?"

—" Oh,

—“ Oh, God !” exclaimed the young stranger, “ it is to me the scene is owing. It is I, wretch that I am, who have been the death of that poor young man ! It is I who have murdered Lady Falconberg ! It is I who have destroyed her daughter !” The astonishment of the persons assembled could be equalled only by the distress evident in the countenance and manner of the elder stranger, who now entreated, now argued ; while Edouarda, who had remained motionless at the beginning of the scene, was suddenly, as the agitated stranger approached nearer to her, struck with the idea of having seen him before ; but when or how he could be interested in any thing that related to her she was in no condition to recollect. Mr. Harrington, who evidently suffered for the state in which he saw the person last arrived, attempted in vain to argue with or restrain him, for he seemed rather irritated than appeased by the interposition  
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of those about him ; and springing suddenly from them, he cried, “ Argue not with me, confine me not, my uncle—Oh! rather punish and reproach me. Had I taken your advice, had I restrained my unfortunate, my guilty passion !—Angel of heaven,” continued he, throwing himself wildly on the ground before Edouarda, “ angel of heaven, look with pity on your murderer, though he deserves only your curses, your indignation !” The words, the suddenness of the action, and the phrenetic eagerness with which Edouarda felt her hands seized, and held to the burning eyes of the distracted object before her, completely overcame the little remaining strength of the unhappy young woman, and she sunk as lifeless as her whom she had been supporting.

Mr. Hartington then severely reproving his nephew, directed the mother and daughter to be carried to their apartments, and carefully attended ;  
while

while he himself collected all his presence of mind to end the distressing scene of legal inquiry, which neither of them was in a condition to witness.

It was not difficult to ascertain that Sir Mordaunt Falconberg had long been in a state of insanity. The testimony of the two priests, which was with great difficulty extorted from them, proved also that the youth who lay before them was a young Italian, who called himself his son, but whom Sir Mordaunt not only did not acknowledge to be so, but whom he had never seen till the fatal moment when the young man perished by his hand.

The younger Mr. Hartington, who had become during this time a little more collected, now came forward. "It was owing to me," cried he, "that this dreadful catastrophe has happened. Some weeks ago I accidentally met Miss Falconberg at a little distance from the park. The singularity of her dress in

such a place, and her uncommon beauty, astonished while they attracted me. I made several efforts to see her again during my short residence afterwards in this part of the country, but never could meet her; and as my uncle was extremely averse from the attempt, and positively refused to interfere for me, I left his house after my usual stay, and returned to London.

“ But the image of Miss Falconberg perpetually pursued me; I saw only her. Her wretched situation stimulated the romantic Quixotism of my disposition; and the charms of her person, as well as knowledge of the splendid fortune to which she was, as I imagined, heiress, continually heated my imagination; and I returned to my uncle’s seat at Heythwaite, resolved to carry my scheme into execution; but to conceal it from Mr. Hartington, whose approbation was not, I found, to be obtained.

“ I endeavoured in vain to interest  
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the directors of Sir Mordaunt's conscience in my favour. Their reasons for refusing every advance were easily understood. I was, however, more successful with one of the keepers who attended him, though he was their creature, and I soon found means to make my interest outweigh that of his original employers.

"I had always, in common with the whole country, believed that Sir Mordaunt was less mad than they wished to have him thought, and I was vain enough to imagine that I could restore him to reason and to liberty, if once I obtained an audience. It was some time before I could make this hazardous attempt. The first time Sir Mordaunt drove me away unheard; and the paroxysm of rage into which he was thrown by the sight of a stranger, ought to have deterred me from making the experiment again. I found however that he did not know his daughter was in his

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house;



house; and for myself, irritated to a degree of resentment against the monks, whose designs appeared to be of the darkest kind, I redoubled my bribes and promises to the attendant. The man loved drink, and the money I gave him enabled him to supply himself so liberally, that I at last found, a few days ago, the opportunity I sought. I saw Sir Mordaunt in a comparatively calm interval. I ventured to tell him what I thought had been concealed from the worst motives. He heard me with more calmness than I expected; though his eyes, as I continued to speak, glared wildly upon me. I imputed some part of his singular manner to doubts of my veracity, and I named to him the part of the house which I knew his daughter inhabited. He started frantically from me, and his keeper entered; at whose signal I retired. I have since learned that a violent fit of passion followed, from which the wretched man had never,

I now

I now find, entirely been recovered; that the priest Galezza was alarmed at his incoherent raving about a stranger, and an application relative to his banished daughter, and sharply questioned the keeper; who being a brutal fellow resented his remonstrance, and very high words had arisen; in consequence of which the man had insisted on his dismissal, and had suddenly left the unfortunate maniac to the care of whoever Galezza could find—and inadequately was that care exercised. The miserable man, having, with that retentive memory so remarkable in lunatics, recollected all I had told him, broke from his new guard, and rushed to the apartment of his daughter; where taking his unknown son for me, who was become the object of his abhorrence, this cruel scene followed.”

The unhappy self-accused Hartington here ended in a faltering voice his melancholy relation. It tallied too well

with the catastrophe ; but reproaches were useless. The forms were now soon gone through. There was no doubt of the deranged state of Sir Mordaunt's mind, and nothing more could be done than more strictly to confine him. Every precaution of that sort, however, was soon rendered unnecessary. Sir Mordaunt, whose shrieks and ravings could not be appeased, was choked by his own blood in about two hours after he had been the murderer of his son !

When Mr. Hartington was apprised of this, he felt himself called upon, as the nearest magistrate, to protect the property of the poor desolate women, Lady Falconberg and her daughter ; and he sent for Golgota and Galezza, and explained to them his intentions. The former resolutely opposed it ; he called himself the friend of the deceased gentleman ; denied that any one had a right to interfere in the affairs of that house ; and spoke in so high and insolent a tone,  
that

that Mr. Hartington, mild as he naturally was, was compelled to remind him of laws which, however obsolete or passed over through the liberality of this country, ought still to be recollected; and if there was an evident necessity for it, he added, that they should still be enforced. Golgota retired, swelling' with impotent revenge, but Galezza appeared disconcerted, and even terrified, and seemed rather desirous of conciliating the favour than irritating the anger of a man who he knew had the power to call them both to a severe account.

The younger Hartington, overwhelmed with anguish and remorse, was with difficulty persuaded, or rather commanded, by his uncle, to return home; while that benevolent man himself, having given the proper orders relative to the dead, and put his seals on the places where any articles of value were supposed to be, went to the apartment whither Lady Falconberg had been carried.

He found her on her bed, furrounded by female fervants who were utterly ignorant what to do. Mr. Hartington dispatched a messenger for the nearest medical assistance, and then endeavoured to awaken Edouarda from the state of torpid grief, in which, with eyes fixed on her mother, and apparently insensible of every thing else, she remained kneeling at the bed-side. But even the voice of reason, of compassionate tenderness, was now unheard. Edouarda looked at him with heavy eyes, that appeared not to behold the object on which they gazed. His words were lost upon her. She turned from him, and, waving one hand to bid him go, touched with the other the pale temples of Lady Falconberg; and then, as if shocked to find no appearance of returning life, shuddered, and relapsed into motionless and silent despair.

A surgeon from a neighbouring town now arrived. He proceeded to bleed  
 Lady

Lady Falconberg. A few drops of blood were with difficulty obtained, and she opened her eyes. Her memory seemed to return; and Edouarda, who had now an object to rouse her, gave her, though without being able to speak, a cordial which the surgeon had brought. But, as if the recollection of her unexampled woes returned with too much strength for so feeble a frame, a frame already exhausted by long years of undeserved anguish, the poor sufferer soon sunk again into the same languid condition, and, after continuing with little variation in that state for three days, breathed her last in the arms of Edouarda.

Mr. Hartington, deeply interested for the unhappy young woman, had continued in the house; and now that her mother was no longer in need of her attendance, he thought the best way would be to take her from a scene where she had suffered such misery. Edouarda,

who appeared to listen more to Rachael than to any other person, was convinced that Lady Falconberg was dead ; yet she still affected to disbelieve it, that she might not be removed. At length, however, exhausted by watching and grief, she became unable to resist the gentle importunity of her new-found protector, and suffered herself to be placed in his coach, and, attended by Rachael, to be removed to Heythwaite, from whence Mr. Hartington had ordered his nephew to depart before her arrival.

He himself attended to the melancholy ceremony of depositing the remains of the unhappy maniac, his wife, and their son, in the vault beneath the chapel. Golgota quitted the house, declaring his resolution to do himself justice against the intrusion of Mr. Hartington, who however totally disregarded his menaces. Galezza, more timid or more prudent, officiated at the sad office, and willingly acceded to Mr. Hartington's

ton's desire, who entreated that all this fatal transaction might be as much as possible concealed from the neighbourhood, and that no circumstance that could possibly be hid should be divulged. The gentlemen of the surrounding country, (none of whom except Mr. Hartington resided within ten miles,) had not been in habits of communication with Palsgrave, and many of them seldom resident in the country, while others felt no interest in what related to a family whom they considered as hardly ranking among their countrymen; while most of the labourers or other persons of inferior rank were Catholics, the converts of the priests; and they were prevented by fear as well as interest from speaking of the little which, by means of the servants, was circulated among them.

The sole survivor of the unhappy family was received by a maiden sister of Mr. Hartington with as much appear-



ance of tenderness as she was capable of putting on ; but she was one of those persons whose faith in her own persuasion greatly exceeded her charity. She did not love Edouarda ; for she was young and beautiful, and supposed to be of another religion. Of feelings such as tore the heart of the unfortunate girl, at so distressing a moment, Mrs. Honora Hartington had no idea ; and her brother, more kind and discerning, soon perceived that the kindest thing he could do towards his mourning guest would be to leave her as much alone as possible. He had sagacity enough to perceive that her understanding was naturally of a superior order, above either common-place consolation or mechanical civility. Edouarda therefore suffered no other importunity than what he was himself under the painful necessity of giving her. It was requisite that he should know if she had any friends or relations, who could undertake the management

ment of her fortune; and the weeping Edouarda then related to him the few and melancholy incidents of her short life. Mr. Hartington in his turn bestowed her attention to the relation he gave of the means usually adopted in this country for the security of the property of minors; and Edouarda putting herself wholly into his hands, he immediately proceeded to make her a ward of the Court of Chancery; while the only sentiment which yet animated her sad existence was that of gratitude towards him for the generous care he took of her.

Two mournful months had passed before Edouarda could enough recover herself to consider what should be her future destination. The country where she had so cruelly suffered was hateful to her, nor had she one motive to induce her to stay in it. But being now a ward of the Court, it was not without difficulty

culty she obtained leave to go to Italy ; where, though she had now no friends, for her mother's relations were long since removed, she thought she should be less wretched than in England ; and diminution of misery rather than attainment of content was all she was permitted to hope for—though in the bloom of early youth, possessed of an uncommon share of personal beauty, and of a fortune which, under other circumstances, would have given her a right to look forward to those situations where the utmost degree of human happiness is supposed to be found.

While Edouarda continued an inmate in his house, Mr. Hartington forbore with the most cautious delicacy to name his nephew. But when she was in London waiting for the few preparations necessary to her departure for the continent, the younger Hartington ventured to write to her ; and deploring the share  
his

his unfortunate intrusion might have had in the dreadful calamity that had befallen her, he solicited in the humblest terms to be heard—imagining probably that Edouarda, like most other women, would be induced to pardon any error which could be imputed to the effect of her charms. But in this he was mistaken : she answered him in words so calm, yet so determined, that his hopes were considerably depressed, and at length entirely crushed, when he received from his uncle a copy of Miss Falconberg's letter to him on the subject, expressing the most invincible aversion to the sight of Mr. Edmund Hartington, and entreating of him, as the greatest friendship he could now shew her, to prevent her ever being distressed by the sight of his nephew.

Golgota and Galezza, to whom, with their original introducer into the family, O'Halloran, all the misery that followed

followed was owing, seemed to be convinced that the last object on which they intended to prey, had escaped as soon as she was taken under the protection of English law. The former, who had accumulated immense sums, was made superior of his order, and has since become a cardinal. Galezza returned also to his own country, and enriched his family as well as his convent with the spoils gathered in England; and these men have ways of satisfying their consciences, and have no scruples as to the means by which money, and consequently another source of power, is acquired. Yet, but for the influence they had gained over the weak mind and wild passions of Sir Mordaunt, he would never have been driven from violence and suspicion to phrensy, and from phrensy to murder. The unhappy Lady Falconberg, whose wretched life was terminated by a death so deplorable, was  
 still

still more their victim. The constitutional infirmities of the unhappy man over whose conscience they had obtained an ascendancy, made Lady Falconberg's life necessary—while the conviction of her guilt, never eradicated from the gloomy and vindictive mind of her husband, deprived her of every power over it, and made her the helpless object of his hideous passions. The eldest of her children dead, the other two banished, none remained to intercept the views of the priests; and nothing could be more unwelcome to them than the arrival of Edouarda, whose removal they had incessantly studied, and in whom they had beheld with fear and indignation that disposition to think for herself, which they foresaw might at some time or other overthrow all their machinations.

When the mind of Edouarda had a little recovered from the torpor of the scenes

scenes of horror she had witnessed, the ceremonies of the people among whom she lived, their blind bigotry, and disgusting mixture of profligacy and superstition, made her reflect more seriously on the tenets in which she had been brought up; and the conviction that to their religious prejudices all the calamities of her family had been owing, assisted her natural good sense to shake off entirely the yoke that had been imposed upon her. Italy became disagreeable to her; and after some time, during which she travelled into Switzerland, she fixed her residence at Lausanne.

Young, lovely, and affluent, Edouarda had many offers of marriage; but she dismissed all her lovers in terms so decided, that hardly any of them ventured to make a second application. Ideas of her father's malady, and the shocking catastrophe it had led to, were ever present to her. She could not bear  
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to suppose that she might transmit such a deranged intellect to her posterity; and in philosophic retirement, with books, and two or three friends whom she occasionally saw, she endeavoured to endure a life, from which her early misfortunes had taken every hope of domestic happiness in the bosom of a family of her own.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



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